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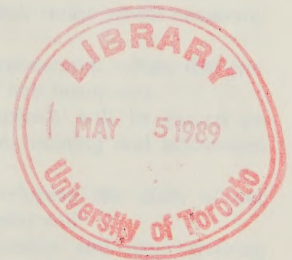
Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

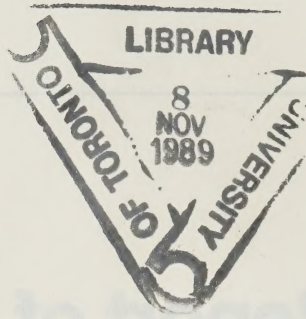
Second Session, 34th Parliament

Tuesday, 25 April 1989



Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Lists of members of the executive council and parliamentary assistants also appear at the back, along with the memberships of committees.

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues can be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at (416) 965-2159.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, 25 April 1989

The second session of the 34th Parliament of the Province of Ontario opened at 1500 for the dispatch of business pursuant to a proclamation of the Honourable Lincoln M. Alexander, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, having entered the chamber and being seated upon the throne, was pleased to open the session with the following gracious speech.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

DISCOURS DU TRÔNE

Hon Mr Alexander: Pray be seated.

Mr Speaker, members of the Legislative Assembly, ladies and gentlemen.

Bienvenue à l'ouverture de la deuxième session de la trente-quatrième législature de la province de l'Ontario.

Since taking office, my government has charted a course for securing a better future for the people of Ontario. We will continue to be guided by our reform agenda.

This session, my government will address the following priorities:

1. Building on our economic strengths to ensure tomorrow's growth;
2. Investing in the future of our children by making our education system a more effective springboard to opportunity;
3. Reforming social assistance to help people move from dependence to self-reliance;
4. Keeping our communities and neighbourhoods safe and secure;
5. Promoting healthy lifestyles and preserving quality health care;
6. Providing leadership in environmental protection.

Today, my government will outline in general terms its approach for meeting these priorities. In the days ahead, cabinet ministers will provide details with respect to these initiatives, as well as other areas of government policy.

To achieve many of our objectives, the government of Canada must honour its funding commitments to joint programs. My government is deeply disturbed by past cutbacks and the erosion of federal commitment to joint programs in areas such as health, environment, post-

secondary education, training, housing and forestry.

These programs are basic to Canada's unique character. Further cutbacks in federal participation and commitment will weaken our ability to achieve economic and social priorities.

We must continue to have a dynamic and growing economy to preserve and enhance our quality of life.

Ontario has outpaced the industrialized world in economic expansion since 1982. Our economy has grown by 41 per cent and has created 800,000 new jobs.

We cannot take this success for granted. We must continue to provide the leadership to build on our economic strengths and ensure tomorrow's growth.

The Premier's Council on Technology has presented an action plan for competing in the international marketplace. We must adjust to a global economy that is characterized by greater competition, rapid technological innovation and diffusion, explosive growth of service industries and the emergence of new trading blocs.

My government will provide leadership by:

Aggressively pursuing new markets for our goods and services;

Targeting support to industries that provide maximum benefits for both workers and the economy;

Supporting the growth of Ontario-based companies as they compete in the global economy, and

Fostering an entrepreneurial culture that promotes the growth of new businesses.

Our primary emphasis will be placed on improving education, training and adjustment programs.

To invest in developing the skills of our people, my government will:

Support apprenticeship and other training arrangements that combine education and on-the-job training;

Help our workers to overcome barriers to training and employment;

Assist the re-employment efforts of workers, particularly older workers, affected by layoffs and plant closures;

Address present and anticipated shortages of skilled workers.

Next year, 1990, will be the International Year of Literacy. The inability to read is both a human and economic tragedy, whether reflected in the eyes of a parent unable to read a bedtime story to a child, or a worker unable to pursue career advancement. My government will act to improve the basic literacy skills of our workforce.

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A purposeful and relevant education system is the key to realizing both the economic potential of our province and the individual potential of our people.

Our elementary schools must assist our children to develop basic learning and social skills in their early years. They must build on that foundation by setting high standards for achievement in subsequent years.

Our secondary schools must give our students the chance to acquire advanced knowledge and provide them with bridges to post-secondary education and the world of work.

At each of these levels a sense of excellence must be instilled.

My government is determined to improve the quality of education for our children. New initiatives will refocus our education system from kindergarten to the end of secondary school.

The early childhood years are the most important years for acquiring basic learning and social skills. The quality of education that our children receive in these critical foundation years will largely determine their ability to succeed at school and in later years.

My government believes that children have the capacity to benefit from education at an earlier age. Our education system must build on their natural curiosity and their capacity for early learning.

My government's long-term vision is to make the opportunity for full-day junior and senior kindergarten available to all four- and five-year-olds.

As a first step, my government will:

Ensure that all school boards offer half-day junior kindergarten for four-year-olds as well as half-day senior kindergarten for five-year-olds, and

Provide funding to school boards to offer full-day senior kindergarten programs where classroom space permits.

These two initiatives will, over the next five years, provide parents with an opportunity to

place their children in a stimulating learning environment at an early age.

As students move through the school system they must continue to develop a wider range of learning and life skills.

As part of an ongoing effort to improve the standard of education, my government has introduced a wide variety of initiatives including a commitment to reduce class sizes in grades 1 and 2. That initiative will be completed next year.

My government will also:

Revitalize the curriculum from grades 1 to 6 by focusing on the development of literacy, analytical and communication skills, and

Place a greater emphasis on assessing student performance and providing remedial help.

Grades 7 to 9 are critical years for helping students make the transition from the basic learning years in elementary school to more advanced and specialized studies in secondary school. My government will restructure those years to ensure a smoother transition.

My government is particularly concerned that we are requiring students to make career choices at an age when they have not yet discovered their full potential.

Therefore, my government will:

Ensure a core curriculum in grades 7, 8 and 9 that emphasizes the development of basic skills and progressive problem-solving;

Eliminate streaming in grade 9.

Our secondary school programs must build on the foundation of acquired learning skills. They must assist students to make informed career choices and address the broader economic needs of our province for a highly skilled workforce.

My government will:

Develop the final years of secondary school, grades 10 to 12, as years of specialization, and

Redesign technological education through updating and consolidating curriculum as well as renewal of teaching equipment. This will be undertaken in partnership with business, labour and our communities.

Grâce à ces mesures, nos enfants auront la possibilité d'acquérir les connaissances et compétences indispensables pour réussir sur le marché du travail ou dans leurs études postsecondaires.

We are determined to invest in the future of our children by making our school system a more effective springboard to opportunity.

In 1988-89 Ontario provided \$2 billion for social assistance, an increase of more than 60 per

cent since 1984-85. Yet the number of people needing social assistance continues to grow.

In the midst of great wealth, many single mothers must rely upon the generosity of others to help provide for their children. Many children are unable to reap the benefits of schooling because the pangs of hunger override the thirst for knowledge.

Poverty is often the lead domino in a chain of problems that encompasses poor health, a shorter life and lower educational achievement.

As a caring society, we cannot stand by and allow this tremendous loss of individual potential. My government recognizes that a new approach is needed. We must do a better job of providing all children with the possibility of a better way of life and the means of attaining it.

We must assist individuals to move from a life of dependence to a life of self-sufficiency.

We will continue to meet the needs of those who are unable to be self-sufficient. For those on social assistance who are capable of being self-reliant, we must do a better job of helping them to move into the mainstream by transforming welfare cheques into paycheques.

Accordingly, my government's reforms to the social assistance system will include:

- Increased payments for shelter support to persons on social assistance;

- Removal of barriers which serve as disincentives to work;

- Expansion of the network of employment counselling, referral, basic training and job preparation programs, and

- Increased children's benefits.

My government recognizes that social assistance reform must be viewed as a shared responsibility. Progress in this area will require the financial support and co-operation of all levels of government and the community at large.

We all take pride in the safety of our communities. Maintaining this sense of security is critical to our province's future wellbeing and development.

My government is concerned about the recent adverse effects on the quality of life in our communities caused by drug and alcohol abuse, racial tension and incidents of violence.

My government will introduce a comprehensive anti-drug strategy which will consist of:

- Education and prevention programs, including anti-drug education in primary and secondary schools, and community-based programs in high-risk neighbourhoods;

- A wider range of treatment programs including employee assistance programs;

- Expansion of Ontario's drug enforcement capacity, including a strengthened Ontario Provincial Police drug enforcement unit.

My government will undertake a number of other measures to protect the quality of life in our communities, including:

- Expanding our efforts to prevent violence against women and children;

- Providing enhanced race relations training to better equip police to respond to the diverse needs of the community they serve;

- Working with the Ontario Provincial Police and all municipal police forces to promote racial equality in employment;

- Urging the federal government to effect immediate changes to the Young Offenders Act, and

- Reforming our court system to improve access to justice.

My government believes that, as a matter of principle, every person is entitled to have access to quality health care regardless of ability to pay.

We are determined to preserve that principle, despite the pressures of an ageing population, the rapidly escalating cost of medical technology and the emergence of new diseases.

In 1987 my government established the Premier's Council on Health Strategy. The council, which represents a partnership among business, labour, government, universities, health care professionals and consumers, is providing advice on how to better meet our future health needs.

The council has developed a broader vision of health for Ontario. This vision recognizes that good health is dependent upon a safe, nonviolent environment; adequate income, housing, food and education; and a person's valued role in family, work and the community.

The council has identified five health goals:

- Shifting the emphasis from treatment after the fact to health promotion and disease prevention;

- Fostering strong and supportive families and communities;

- Ensuring a safe and high-quality physical environment;

- Increasing the number of years of good health for Ontarians by reducing illness, disability and premature death, and

- Providing accessible, affordable, appropriate health services for all.

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My government will introduce a number of initiatives to help realize these goals, including

specific measures to address specialty care needs in areas such as emergency services, cancer care, cardiovascular services, dialysis, trauma, acquired immune deficiency syndrome and maternal and infant health.

A clean and safe environment is one of the cornerstones of our effort to promote better health. Ontario will continue to demonstrate leadership in environmental protection to ensure the quality of our air, water and food.

We recognize that this will require a broad effort that involves individuals, business and all levels of government. Environmental protection must be a shared responsibility.

As part of a global effort, we will encourage everyone to reduce, reuse, recycle and recover waste. In addition to preventing future environmental abuse, we will continue to restore environmentally damaged areas.

My government will introduce measures such as:

Requiring that vapours produced by automobile fuels, which contribute to air pollution, be reduced;

Strict control standards to cut automobile-produced acid rain emissions by one third by the year 2000;

A comprehensive Ontario waste reduction strategy designed to meet the target of reducing Ontario's solid waste by 50 per cent by the year 2000;

Programs to stimulate the development of pollution abatement technologies;

A new lottery fund, Cleantario, to help finance our ongoing efforts to protect our environment;

Programs to encourage more efficient water use and conservation by both industries and individuals, and

Educational programs to help students develop a greater sense of personal responsibility for environmental protection.

My government's foremost concern is to build a better future for our children. We want to ensure that every child is nurtured in an environment that provides adequate food, clothing and shelter. We know that we must attend to those basic needs if our children are to realize their full potential.

We want our children to grow up in communities that are safe and secure—free of the fear of crime, free of physical abuse and free of the tyranny of drug and alcohol abuse.

We want our children to grow up in a society that promotes healthy living—in its homes, in its schools and in its places of work.

We want our children's individual efforts at living healthy lifestyles to be matched by a greater shared responsibility for our environment. We know that we must ensure that economic growth and environmental protection go hand in hand.

We want to provide our children with the basic knowledge and learning skills needed to seize the opportunities offered by the very different world of the 21st century.

Nous voulons qu'en envisageant l'avenir, nos enfants aient confiance en leurs aptitudes, soient fiers de leur diversité et n'éprouvent aucune inquiétude quant à leur qualité de vie.

Ontario is a prosperous society. Our province is a safe, clean and healthy place in which to live. We must make sure that it remains that way for all Ontarians.

Puisse la divine Providence vous guider dans vos délibérations.

In our Sovereign's name, I thank you.

God bless the Queen and Canada.

His Honour the Lieutenant Governor was pleased to retire from the chamber.

Prayers.

The Speaker: I beg to inform the House that, to prevent mistakes, I have obtained a copy of His Honour's speech, which I will now read. [Reading dispensed with.]

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD AMENDMENT ACT, 1989

Hon Mr Scott moved first reading of Bill 1, An Act to amend the Ontario Municipal Board Act.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Hon Mr Conway moved that the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor to this House be taken into consideration tomorrow, Wednesday, 26 April 1989.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 1530.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*

(130 seats)

First Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)
 Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)
 Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)
 Beer, Charles (York North L)
 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)
 Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)

Bradley, Hon. James J., Minister of the
 Environment (St. Catharines L)

Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breagh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)
 Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)
 Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)

Caplan, Hon. Elinor, Minister of Health
 (Orillia L)

Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)
 Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
 Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)
 Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)
 Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)

Conway, Hon. Sean G., Minister of Mines
 (Renfrew North L)

Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)
 Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)
 Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)
 Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)

Curling, Hon. Alvin, Minister of Skills
 Development (Scarborough North L)

Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)
 Dietsch, Michael M. (St. Catharines-Brock L)

Eakins, Hon. John F., Minister of Municipal
 Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)

Edighoffer, Hon. Hugh A., Speaker (Perth L)
 Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)

Elston, Hon. Murray J., Chairman of the
 Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of
 Financial Institutions (Bruce L)

Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)
 Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)
 Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)
 Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)
 Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)
 Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)
 Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)

Fontaine, Hon. René, Minister of Northern
 Development (Cochrane North L)

Fulton, Hon. Ed, Minister of Transportation
 (Scarborough East L)

Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)

Grandmaitre, Hon. Bernard C., Minister of
 Revenue (Ottawa East L)

Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)

Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)

Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)

Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)

Hart, Christine E. (York East L)

Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)

Hošek, Hon. Chaviva, Minister of Housing
 (Oakwood L)

Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)

Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)

Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)

Kanter, Ron (St. Andrew-St. Patrick L)

Kerrio, Hon. Vincent G., Minister of Natural
 Resources (Niagara Falls L)

Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)

Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)

Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)

Kwinter, Hon. Monte, Minister of Industry,
 Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L)

Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)

LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)

Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)

Lipsett, Ron (Grey L)

Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L)

MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L)

Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)

Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)

Mancini, Hon. Remo, Minister without Port-
 folio (Essex South L)

Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)

Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)

Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L)

McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)

McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)

McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)

McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)

McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)

McLeod, Hon. Lyn, Minister of Colleges and
 Universities (Fort William L)

Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)
Nixon, Hon. Robert F., Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics (Brant-Haldimand L)
Oddie Munro, Hon. Lily, Minister of Culture and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)
O'Neil, Hon. Hugh P., Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Quinte L)
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)
Patten, Hon. Richard, Minister of Government Services (Ottawa Centre L)
 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)
Peterson, Hon. David R., Premier and President of the Council and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (London Centre L)
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)
Phillips, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Citizenship (Scarborough-Agincourt L)
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott and Russell L)
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)
Ramsay, Hon. David, Minister of Correctional Services (Timiskaming L)
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-Walkerville L)
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)
 Reyecraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)
Riddell, Hon. Jack, Minister of Agriculture and Food (Huron L)
 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)
Scott, Hon. Ian G., Attorney General (St. George-St. David L)
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)
Smith, Hon. E. Joan, Solicitor General (London South L)
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)
Sorbara, Hon. Gregory S., Minister of Labour (York Centre L)

South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)
 Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)
 Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)
Sweeney, Hon. John, Minister of Community and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)
 Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)
 Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)
 Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)
Ward, Hon. Christopher C., Minister of Education (Wentworth North L)
 Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)
Wilson, Hon. Mavis, Minister without Portfolio (Dufferin-Peel L)
 Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)
Wong, Hon. Robert C., Minister of Energy (Fort York L)
Wrye, Hon. William, Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Peterson, Hon. David R., Premier and President of the Council and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
 Nixon, Hon. Robert F., Deputy Premier, Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics
 Conway, Hon. Sean G., Minister of Mines
 Bradley, Hon. James J., Minister of the Environment
 Scott, Hon. Ian G., Attorney General
 Riddell, Hon. Jack, Minister of Agriculture and Food
 Eakins, Hon. John F., Minister of Municipal Affairs
 Kerrio, Hon. Vincent G., Minister of Natural Resources
 O'Neil, Hon. Hugh P., Minister of Tourism and Recreation
 Sweeney, Hon. John, Minister of Community and Social Services
 Elston, Hon. Murray J., Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions
 Wrye, Hon. William, Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations
 Grandmaitre, Hon. Bernard C., Minister of Revenue
 Curling, Hon. Alvin, Minister of Skills Development
 Fulton, Hon. Ed, Minister of Transportation
 Kwinter, Hon. Monte, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology
 Oddie Munro, Hon. Lily, Minister of Culture and Communications

Sorbara, Hon. Gregory S., Minister of Labour
 Caplan, Hon. Elinor, Minister of Health
 Fontaine, Hon. René, Minister of Northern Development
 Ramsay, Hon. David, Minister of Correctional Services
 Smith, Hon. E. Joan, Solicitor General
 Ward, Hon. Christopher C., Minister of Education
 Hošek, Hon. Chaviva, Minister of Housing
 McLeod, Hon. Lyn, Minister of Colleges and Universities
 Patten, Hon. Richard, Minister of Government Services
 Phillips, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Citizenship
 Wong, Hon. Robert C., Minister of Energy
 Mancini, Hon. Remo, Minister without Portfolio
 Wilson, Hon. Mavis, Minister without Portfolio

PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANTS

Ballinger, William G.: assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources (Durham-York L)
 Beer, Charles: assistant to the Minister of Education (York North L)
 Brown, Michael A.: assistant to the Minister of Mines (Algoma-Manitoulin L)
 Cordiano, Joseph: assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Lawrence L)
 Faubert, Frank: assistant to the Minister of Revenue (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)
 Ferraro, Rick E.: assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions (Guelph L)
 Haggerty, Ray: assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Niagara South L)
 Hart, Christine E. (Ms.): assistant to the Minister of Treasury and Economics (York East L)
 Kanter, Ron: assistant to the Solicitor General (St. Andrew-St. Patrick L)
 Keyes, Kenneth A.: assistant to the Minister of Health (Kingston and The Islands L)
 LeBourdais, Linda (Mrs.): assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Etobicoke West L)
 Leone, Laureano: assistant to the Minister of Culture and Communications (Downsview L)
 Lupusella, Tony: assistant to the Minister of Government Services (Dovercourt L)
 Mahoney, Steven W.: assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mississauga West L)
 McClelland, Carman: assistant to the Minister of the Environment (Brampton North L)
 McGuigan, James F.: assistant to the Minister of Transportation (Essex-Kent L)
 McGuinty, Dalton J.: assistant to the Minister of Skills Development (Ottawa South L)
 Miclash, Frank: assistant to the Minister of Northern Development (Kenora L)
 Miller, Gordon I.: assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Norfolk L)
 Morin, Gilles E.: assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Carleton East L)
 Nixon, J. Bradford: assistant to the Minister of Housing (York Mills L)
 Offer, Steven: assistant to the Attorney General (Mississauga North L)
 Polsinelli, Claudio: assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Yorkview L)
 Ruprecht, Tony: assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services (Parkdale L)
 Smith, David W.: assistant to the Minister of Correctional Services (Lambton L)
 South, Larry: assistant to the Minister of Energy (Frontenac-Addington L)
 Sullivan, Barbara (Mrs.): assistant to the Minister of Labour (Halton Centre L)
 Velshi, Murad: assistant to the Minister of Citizenship (Don Mills L)

*The alphabetical list of members appears in each issue. The other lists, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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No. 2

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament
Wednesday, 26 April 1989



Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, 26 April 1989

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker: I would like to ask all members to join me in recognizing the first group of legislative pages to serve in the second session of the 34th Parliament. They are:

Sarah Bhatti, Ottawa-Rideau; Edward Conroy, Scarborough Centre; Jeremy Dickson, Rainy River; Carolyn Elston, Huron; Julie Felton, Lambton; Jocelyn Kervin, Timiskaming; Rasha Khayat, York Mills; Natasha Klukach, Bruce; Marcel Lemay, Sudbury; Michael Marsden, Carleton; Mark McLeod, Port Arthur; Ian Ross, Lake Nipigon; Joseph Santos, Kingston and The Islands; Teresinha Silva, Parkdale; Cindy Sleiman, Essex South; Jamie Smith, Kitchener; Anne-Marie Stacyszyn, Windsor-Walkerville; Robert Taylor, Parry Sound; Robert Thomson, Ottawa Centre; Gwyneth Tristram, Chatham-Kent; Meghan Whittaker Van Dusen, Scarborough West; Samantha Winslow, Burlington South; Blair Yarranton, Quinte, and Heather Young, Waterloo North.

Please join me in welcoming our pages.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr Mackenzie: On Friday, 28 April, a national day of mourning for workers killed or injured on the job will be observed in cities across Canada. As this House will not be sitting on Friday, I would ask the Speaker and members of the other parties to acknowledge the sacrifice of our workers with a minute of silence in this House on Thursday, 27 April, as well as an opportunity for each party to make a few comments.

I personally found it disturbing that on the eve of this national day of mourning, in response to questions on the omissions from his throne speech, our Premier (Mr Peterson) should be quoted as saying he was not certain his government would be proceeding with its own piece of health and safety legislation, Bill 208.

Surely the accident record of the last year and particularly the disturbing number of avoidable

mining deaths in the last few months clearly indicate that the need to endorse labour's concern for a campaign to end slaughter in the workplace is more valid today than when it was first launched a number of years ago.

It is legitimate to ask this government what its commitment to health and safety in the workplace is worth and when Bill 208 will be brought forward for second reading in this Legislature.

SOUTH CENTENNIAL MANOR

Mr Pope: Not only was there no reference in the speech from the throne yesterday to northern Ontario or to mining, forestry or the resource sector, but there was also no mention of assistance for the homes for the aged across the province.

I want to bring to the attention of the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr Sweeney) and this government a very particular situation involving South Centennial Manor in Iroquois Falls.

On 28 July 1988, as a result of a level-of-care study conducted by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, there was a recommendation to increase the nursing staff at South Centennial Manor, and that permission was given in a letter from the minister to the board of that particular manor.

But, lo and behold, when the budget allocations for this current fiscal year were forwarded to the South Centennial Manor, there was no funding for the increased staff they had asked South Centennial Manor to hire the previous year.

As a result of that, notices of layoff or reduced hours were sent to 18 employees of South Centennial Manor in order to reduce the equivalent of eight full-time positions, and immediate were steps taken to transfer 10 extended care residents to area hospitals.

This situation was created by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, which tried to blame the Minister of Northern Development (Mr Fontaine) in letters it sent to the board.

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr Pope: The fact of the matter is it is incompetent management to allow this to happen.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr Faubert: Yesterday, as the Lieutenant Governor read the speech from the throne, I thought of the people who took the time to make submissions before a hearing I and the member for Scarborough Centre (Miss Nicholas) held Monday in the Scarborough Civic Centre on the report Transitions. Also at that meeting was the member for Kitchener (Mr D. R. Cooke), the chairman of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs.

In all, submissions were made by 15 groups and individuals ranging from welfare providers, food bank representatives, community service groups and welfare recipients to concerned individuals from advocacy groups and church representatives.

Their submissions covered such concerns as a need to simplify the social assistance system as well as an express need to ensure that incentives, skills and opportunities are harnessed so that those alienated by the system can once again become participants in the workforce. Another recurring concern was the effect of the high cost of housing on the budget of social assistance recipients and the working poor.

The presentations ranged from angry to extremely poignant, but all expressed hope in the implementation of the Transitions report.

The throne speech expressed this government's commitment as it announced such progressive initiatives as increased payments for shelter support to persons on social assistance; the removal of barriers which serve as disincentives to work; the expansion of the network of employment counselling and referral; basic training and preparation programs, and increased children's benefits.

The visionary intentions of this government announced yesterday will indeed give hope to the people I spoke to last Monday that the barriers of poverty will one day be overcome.

1340

PROPOSED BUILDING SITE

Mr R. F. Johnston: Among the platitudes of the throne speech were promises on environmental protection, including setting up Cleantario where the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley) will impersonate Vanna White and basically try to convince the people of Ontario that this is a new game show we should all follow. I would be very pleased if this government were in fact using the legislation and the powers it has now to protect the environment.

In my riding, a development is proposed metres away from a dump site where 4,000-plus people will be housed unless this government decides it is appropriate to have a full environmental assessment of that site. Today I will be introducing some of the petitions I have from the community members who insist that this government take that kind of action to protect them from the inappropriate development this would entail. This is the Runnymede site on Gerrard Street in my riding.

It would be a terrible misuse of his present powers if the Minister of the Environment is not given the go-ahead by cabinet to require a full environmental assessment of this project.

PROPOSED EARTH SCIENCES CENTRE

Mr Pollock: A group of concerned citizens from the Bancroft area is interested in establishing an earth sciences centre. There have been many letters and calls to different ministries about this project.

Most recently, the project planning committee received a letter of support from the Minister of Mines (Mr Conway). The minister said that he is in favour of undertaking a feasibility study to explore the options and the costs of the involvement. I too would like to lend my support to this project. I hope the Ontario ministries involved will do their utmost to assist the Bancroft citizens with their request for financial help for this feasibility study.

I sincerely hope the earth sciences centre becomes a reality in eastern Ontario. It would be a major tourist attraction and education centre for the area and could be a positive focus in the mineral industry.

PALLIATIVE CARE

Mr Adams: The concept of a place to die with dignity is pre-Christian, but the current hospice movement has its roots among the poor of Europe a century ago. Then, homes for the dying were set up for those with tuberculosis, the scourge of the time.

The first modern hospice was set up in Britain in the 1960s and the movement spread rapidly to other parts of the world, including North America. The new homes for the dying were for those terminally ill with cancer and, more recently, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, the scourges of the 20th century.

Hospices offer a variety of support services for the dying and their families. Some offer 24-hour hospital care, some offer care and respite

services on a daily basis, while others offer professional and volunteer home care.

In Canada, there are two free-standing hospices, Casey House in Toronto for AIDS victims, and Maison Michel Sarrazin, near Quebec City, for cancer patients. There are, however, some 30 hospice organizations in Ontario alone. A good contact before a provincial association is established is Palliative Care Services of York Region. Those interested in setting up a home care hospice could contact Hospice Peterborough, described in my statement of 17 October 1988 to this House.

SENIOR CITIZENS' SERVICES

Ms Bryden: As the critic for senior citizens' affairs, I was shocked to find no part of the throne speech devoted to plans for dealing with the huge increase expected in senior population in the next decade. We will need a great many more geriatric services, a great many more programs to help seniors stay in their own homes, a great many more programs to look after the health care of seniors.

I am sure all seniors in this province were also shocked at the failure of the government to deal with the extreme shortage of homemakers in the province. Homemaker programs are an essential part of enabling seniors to stay in their own homes as long as possible and are much less expensive than institutionalization.

Previous throne speeches promised big increases in homemaker programs for seniors, but this year's speech does not even mention them. In fact, expenditures on homemaker programs were frozen on 30 September 1988. When will the government lift the freeze and make adequate homemaker services available throughout the province?

The Speaker: There are five seconds left. I believe no one would want to make a statement in that time.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

Hon Mr Ward: I am very pleased and proud that yesterday's speech from the throne had such a great emphasis on the quality and renewal of education in this province. This government's agenda clearly places children first and is based on the principles of equal opportunity, accountability and the need to ensure that our children progress and grow with the skills they will need throughout their lives.

Today I am pleased to provide details of an important throne speech initiative, a key compo-

nent of our plan for education reform; that is, the elimination of streaming in grade 9 and providing a core curriculum in the transition years of grades 7, 8 and 9.

Over the past 18 months, having met with many parents and educators, I have come to the conclusion that our young people must have the opportunity to fully explore their options and develop their interests and abilities before choosing an area of specialization that will ultimately help determine their career paths. But equally important is each student's need for a solid foundation of knowledge and of skills.

Our new core program in the transition years will build upon a renewed emphasis on basic skills in the primary grades, with a focus on measuring achievement, identifying problem areas and providing extra help where needed.

More than ever, today's young people must have the ability to communicate clearly. They must also acquire basic skills in mathematics, science and technology and understand how these subjects apply to their lives. All of our children must have an equal opportunity to master the skills and knowledge that will be essential in finding meaningful employment in a new and highly competitive economy.

This program will be fully in place as of September 1992. Three quarters of the new core program in grade 9 will consist of mandatory subjects, a core curriculum including such essential areas as language, mathematics, science and technology. Students will be permitted to choose options for only one quarter of their grade 9 program, including such electives as technological studies, business studies and family studies.

In the days and months to come, I will be consulting with our partners in education on the implementation of this initiative. With their advice and expertise, I believe we can develop a curriculum and teacher training program that will be required and avoid the kinds of problems that were associated with the last structural change in 1984, when structures were changed without the appropriate backup and teaching resources.

In keeping with the excellent recommendations of the select committee on education, I will soon announce pilot projects in various parts of the province to assist us in developing the most appropriate curriculum and implementation strategy.

The process of learning is a process of change, and clearly we have to show the flexibility to accommodate this change. If we are to be successful in providing all of our students with an

equal opportunity to learn, we must make it easier for students to adapt and switch areas of specialization in their later years. Our emphasis all through these years will be on counselling, flexibility, co-operative learning, enhanced guidance and home-room teaching.

The opportunity to learn must be an opportunity shared by all of our children. These and other changes will help us to allow our children to reach their full potential.

RESPONSES

ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

Mr R. F. Johnston: It was a short throne speech, some might even say a focused throne speech. Some of us were a little disappointed with the constraints on it, and now we are finding out that even that which was supposed to be the meat of the throne speech is not going to take effect in this province until 1992.

We are going to have three more throne speeches before we even see this program on destreaming take place, and we are supposed to get excited about the action of this reform-minded Liberal government which is now reasserting its agenda.

1350

This is laughable. It clearly indicates that the minister himself has a bit of a reading problem. He had a little remedial help in terms of even looking at what the consensus of the select committee on education said. He seems to have been able to read only certain recommendations. He missed certain pages almost entirely as he has brought forward this half-baked notion of what destreaming is going to be.

I would just like to suggest to the minister that one of our prime notions on that committee is that there has to be an emphasis on counselling, not just one word about it in a statement in his second-last paragraph, but an understanding that kids in grades 7 and 8 do not receive sufficient counselling at this stage and that there is a gap between the counselling they receive in the elementary panel and what they receive in the secondary panel. We suggested that he link up that counselling and make the counsellors follow the students as a fundamental portion of what he is talking about.

He said very little in this speech of his today, short as it is on detail, about whether he understands that there must be a reduction of class size in grade 9 if he is going to make this work.

Teachers in the secondary panel who have been teaching heterogeneous classes—in other

words, they have been specializing in dealing with a basic-skill class or an advanced-skill class but not mixing those kids in their classes—are not trained to deal with the kind of new heterogeneity we are asking for.

They are not used to the home-room style of teachers who have most of the classes under their care and they are not going to be able to deal with 30 kids in that kind of a situation where we have several learning-disabled kids, some kids who would normally be considered basic-level kids, some general-level kids and some advanced-level kids.

They are not going to be able to deal with those without a major reduction in class size in grade 9, and there is no recognition of that fact in this presentation, even though the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, when it came before us, stressed that the government would have to make these kinds of changes.

I do not understand why the minister has not said something here about the kind of retraining possibilities that will be there for those teachers and about what he is going to do to pick up the bucks that will be required if that is to be done appropriately.

The important thing about this is we tried to indicate in the committee that we have to start the notion of getting away from streaming an awful lot earlier in the system and that grouping kids by ability only was taking place in the primary section at the moment, not just in the intermediate section, and that whole practice has to be broken.

Again, the minister has not concentrated on that this afternoon, as he should have, and as a result is telling us the government has not thought through how to do this, has no particular plan at all to put forward and is not going to be answering the great concerns out there in the teaching community and in the boards about this kind of process.

Those of us who have been wanting to see destreaming undertaken are basically kind of disappointed that the minister is so slow off the mark and that he has not realized the context it should be put in. Those people who are hostile to destreaming are going to have all of their fears magnified by this announcement today.

We in this party are very disappointed with the lack of direction of the government at this time.

Mr Jackson: I guess my primary concern about the minister's announcement is that it follows so quickly on the heels of the throne speech yesterday. I understand that the government is carving out this territory with respect to

educational reforms. They read a couple of polls. They tell the public what it would like to hear. There has been very limited consultation on the specific details of implementation.

What the public must realize very quickly about this government's quick-off-the-mark approach to education is the overall context in which the financing for these educational reforms will occur. The government must realize, and the minister is painfully aware of it, that the general legislative grants in this province have dropped from 44.6 per cent down to 42.7 per cent, one of the most severe, draconian drops in general legislative grants in the last decade.

The minister has to realize that everything he enunciates in this House has a pricetag attached to it. He keeps reducing the provincial contribution and further compounding and overloading local property taxpayers all across this province.

The fact is that he will not address the issue of resources. In his response to the select committee on education, very clearly the only mention he makes of the commitment to fund these programs—I will quote directly from his response—the Minister of Education (Mr Ward) says his ministry “recognizes the importance of providing resources to boards and will continue to make every effort to secure appropriate financing.”

It is abundantly clear, based on the general legislative grants and based on the recent capital allocation and his formula reduction, that the minister is losing in his battle at the cabinet table for the necessary resources to implement these kinds of reforms.

I want to ask the minister about his time lines for implementation. There were some very good presentations made to his office during the select committee on education activities but, quite frankly, his implementation date is mysteriously timed for the next provincial election.

If he is going to use pilot projects across this province, how can he suggest that these pilot projects, with only one year, or a year and a half at best, will give him sufficient time to analyse whether or not they have been effectively implemented?

Finally, I would ask the minister, because he has not been very clear in his very brief announcement today, what treatment he is going to be giving to students in occupational and vocational schools because, quite frankly, mainstreaming in these institutions presents a severe challenge to some of Ontario's students. We do not want the minister in his announcement

to leave those teachers, those students and those parents out on a limb.

I see the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons (Mr Mancini) is nodding in disapproval, but there is a Western Secondary School down in his part of the country and it cannot get a straight answer from this government with respect to where it is going with vocational students. I encourage the minister who sits directly behind the Minister of Education to perhaps examine this question and demand that the minister make some clarifying statements for those families of vocational students.

I would encourage the government to stop continuing in its trend of avoiding being the bill payer of this province for education reforms and stop being the total and solitary decision-maker for educational matters in this province and to work in a consultative manner with both school boards and teachers in terms of implementing these reforms.

Mrs Cunningham: I think the real question for the transition years in education is, one, who will teach these students? We are talking about 140 people in teachers' colleges across this province, 140 in technical education studies. They should all be hired by one school board tomorrow. That is 140 technical teachers for the whole of the province.

The other question that should be answered is, “Where will they be taught?” Right now, the real problem in education is that we have too many students in portables. Does this really mean, during the transition years, that we will be teaching students of technical education and business in portables? When the minister talks about partners in education, is he talking about co-operating with business and industry, and where is the emphasis today on technological education?

1400

ORAL QUESTIONS

WASTE DISPOSAL

Mr B. Rae: I have some questions today to the Premier about garbage. During the break, the Premier was very heavily involved with the announcements made by the five regional chairmen about garbage and the disposal of garbage. He was personally at the press conference.

I would like to ask him a question very directly, and bring him down to earth if I can with respect to some of the things that were said yesterday in the throne speech. There is a contingency landfill which is now being actively

discussed, the next landfill that will take in the garbage from the five regions.

The chairmen talk about the fact that the province has agreed on contingency provisions because it wishes to avert any potential environmental crisis. The greater Toronto area proposal is very careful to say that there will be a "public environmental suitability examination," but it does not refer to an environmental assessment.

I want to ask the Premier specifically this question. Can he tell us whether there will be a complete, exhaustive environmental assessment of the next dump site contingency, part-time, full-time or whatever, or are we going to make do with a process in which the government simply does an end run around this whole situation?

Hon Mr Peterson: I think the minister can help my honourable friend with this whole matter.

Hon Mr Bradley: I have missed the House over the last period of time and the opportunity to share a few thoughts with my colleagues.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Where are those fluorescent green pants you were wearing?

Hon Mr Bradley: They are not on today. This is just the tie today.

Mr Reville: Where do you scratch and sniff?

Hon Mr Elston: Mr Speaker, they will not let the honourable member answer the question. They do not want to hear the answer to this.

Hon Mr Bradley: There will be tickets available at the appropriate time. I know that members of the opposition will want some of those tickets and we will ensure that they are available across Ontario.

In regard to the question of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr B. Rae), there have been a number of discussions which have taken place between officials of the government of Ontario and the chairmen of the regions, who have expressed an interest in getting together to work on the environmental challenges that they must meet over the next few years in terms of disposal of garbage.

One of the areas that we have placed a good deal of emphasis on, of course, is the fact that there must be a very significant diversion of waste from either landfills or incinerators in Ontario. We have established the goal, as the member would know, of course, of some 25 per cent by the year 1992 and 50 per cent by the year 2000.

Mrs Grier: I would certainly like to welcome the Minister of the Environment to the discussion of the greater Toronto area's waste disposal

problems. It is the first time he has been heard from on the issue, so we are glad that the question was deflected to him. I did not hear an answer to the Leader of the Opposition's question and I would like to place it very directly to the Minister of the Environment.

Does the Minister of the Environment consider that the inclusion in the GTA proposal of the description, "public environmental suitability examination," when it comes to the contingency landfill, is sufficient? If not, will he ensure that there is a full environmental assessment of any contingency landfill?

Hon Mr Bradley: As the Premier indicated at the time of the announcement, looking at the long-term efforts of the various regions that are attempting to get together to solve problems which they have had to solve exclusive of another in the past, they have indicated very clearly that there will be an environmental assessment taking place because we are looking well into the future when we talk about the long-term results of this particular scrutiny of any of the options that are available.

In terms of the interim, the member knows that in our policy in Ontario, we have expansions which take place from time to time. We have applied a policy that where an expansion takes place or an addition to a site takes place, there is an appropriate environmental hearing under the Environmental Protection Act in that specific instance of an expansion of a site, which examines very carefully all aspects of that particular site that may be placed on the table.

Any site that would come forward on an interim basis, we would look at very carefully to determine what should and what should not be approved. Our ministry officials look at it carefully. All government agencies scrutinize very carefully any site that would be put forward to determine whether that site is environmentally safe or not. We want to ensure that all the scientific and technical information—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr B. Rae: On 23 January 1989, I asked the Premier to tell us in detail what he knew about the proposal from Envacc Resources for the greater Toronto area. The Premier said this was a regional responsibility. He did not tell me or the House that on 23 June 1988 he met with a number of the principals of Envacc Resources, was briefed for some time, gave that company particular advice as to how to proceed and indicated that he was impressed with the fact that Marco Muzzo was one of the principals of the company.

Was the minister present at that meeting? Can he tell us why the Premier did not inform the House as to the details of that meeting? Can he tell us, if he was not there, why he was not included in a discussion which is of considerable importance to the future of the environment of the greater Toronto area?

Hon Mr Bradley: As the Leader of the Opposition will know, the Premier meets with a number of people throughout the year, probably hundreds, perhaps thousands of people, to discuss a number of proposals that affect the government as a whole.

The member will recall particularly that the Premier is the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs as well as being the Premier. In that capacity he has the ability to meet with people who are regional chairmen and other municipal people on a variety of subjects. It is to be said that all options are available to the regional chairmen who have agreed to get together to solve what they consider to be a genuine challenge in the future and that all options are being canvassed by those people.

The Premier has, over a series of months, met with a number of people on this subject and other subjects, to deal with the Metropolitan Toronto area, the adjacent regions and some of the long-term options that the government of Ontario is canvassing. I am sure that in the future, if public sector or private sector people desire to meet with the Premier, they will have an opportunity to do so.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr B. Rae: The question is whether he will invite the minister to the meeting. I guess that is the one we are all asking.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr B. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions about car insurance. The minister made an announcement a couple of weeks ago about his plans for the future.

I wonder if he can tell us exactly what authority under the current act, the law which was debated and presented by the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) when he was minister and which was debated in this House for some time, what sections, what parts of the act he is relying on in his declaration that there will be a 7.6 per cent cap for this year and that in fact no changes will take place until 1990. Can he tell us what legal authority he has for that?

Hon Mr Elston: Legislation will be required and it will be brought forward in due course.

Mr B. Rae: I wonder if the minister could then confirm that he is telling us that this House spent weeks, indeed months, debating legislation with respect to automobile insurance following the 1987 election—I want to make sure I have got this right—we then set up the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board, which spent over \$7 million of public money in having a hearing on classification and on rates, involving millions of dollars of insurance money which ends up coming out of the hides of drivers, that is literally millions and millions of dollars taken out of the hides of drivers and out of the hides of taxpayers—

The Speaker: Question.

Mr B. Rae: After that entire process is over, is the minister telling us that what the insurance board has done and ordered will not in fact take place this year? Is that what he is telling us?

Hon Mr Elston: The value of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board has been well discussed, and I can assure the member that the advice it has given me in the course of several recommendations has provided us here in the legislative forum and also the public with the opportunity to examine in very minute detail the manner in which insurance rates are structured or put together and the components that go into determining what costs there are in running insurance programs.

1410

You will know, Mr Speaker, much better than perhaps the Leader of the Opposition, that money spent in examining in very thorough detail the way in which products are delivered to provide protections for the citizens of this province is never misspent; in fact, the money has been well spent and has been very useful for us as we examine options which are ahead of us.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that we are moving to examine the options that are now in front of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board and that we view the deliberations that it is now involved with as being very critical items, in particular items which will come forward to us as we make a decision on product reform.

The money has been well spent. It has been well worth it and in fact it has been a process which has provided the public in Ontario with the best education possible, I think, about insurance in any jurisdiction in North America.

Mr B. Rae: I talked to the minister about this back in February 1989 when we got the first report out from the insurance board. I want the minister to listen to the words he used to describe what I said. I warned him what would happen in

terms of rates going up and what the implication would be. He said what I said was absolutely false; he said what I said was absolutely wrong. He went on to say that we did not know what we were talking about and that as time unfolded, time would prove how right the minister was and how wrong the critics of him were, whether they were on this side or in that party—my good friend the member for Leeds-Grenville (Mr Runciman)—or from the senior citizens' organizations.

Hon Mr Wrye: There's a real setback for his leadership.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Ward: You guys are going to have a strike.

Mr Reville: He just dropped 10 points in the poll.

Hon Mr Bradley: Are you watching, Tom Long?

The Speaker: Order, order.

Hon Mr Scott: One down, six to go.

Hon Mr Bradley: Left is right and right is left.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Conway: Boy, that makes Lorne Nystrom look pure.

Hon Mr Peterson: Who are you running for anyway?

Mr Harris: May I get a thousand copies of that Hansard?

The Speaker: Order. Does the Leader of the Opposition have the final supplementary?

Mr B. Rae: I do; and when I say "Leader of the Opposition," I mean the whole opposition.

What I want to ask the minister is, in light of the things that he said would happen—which have proven to be completely false—if I may borrow his words, and in light of the allegations which he made about all of us on the other side who were so critical, does he not think he owes it to the people of this province to resign, in light of the genuine incompetence that he has shown in terms of the handling of this issue? It has cost millions of dollars; it has wasted taxpayers' money.

Hon Mr Elston: I owe it to the public of this province to ensure that we have a product that protects the people. That is what I am doing; I move with dispatch to make sure there is protection in place for the people of this province. I may have made a mistake in trying to find a common bridge between the Leader of the Opposition and the left-leaning member for Leeds-Grenville, but I see that has now occurred. The leader agrees that they are good pals and

everything, but I will say that I never deviate from my one criterion, and that is that with respect to this party we reach to protect the public of this province in a way which is sensible and in fact sensitive to the needs of the people. I will never deviate from that. I will step in where required to protect the interests of the public. I will not shirk my responsibility in that manner at all.

Mr Brandt: As an aside, let me just say that the member for Leeds-Grenville has been called many things, but very few times has he been called left wing—I want members to know that—or particularly a friend of the Leader of the Opposition.

KINDERGARTEN

Mr Brandt: My first question is to the Premier and it is with respect to the throne speech which was read yesterday. The Premier will recall the section relating to the extension of programs for students in kindergarten and the half day that was going to be made available through his government for four-year-olds and a full day of kindergarten classes for five-year-olds.

Government officials we have contacted have indicated to us that this will require some 50,000 student spaces in order to fulfil the Premier's commitment made in his throne speech. I know that the government would not make such a commitment without a very full, a very thorough and a very detailed analysis of the cost.

Would the Premier simply share the cost of this program, what he feels it is going to amount to in terms of the total cost for providing these spaces, and will the Premier indicate and make a commitment that his government is going to pay for those costs?

Hon Mr Peterson: First of all, let me say to my honourable friend that I am delighted he is here to ask such an insightful question. We were all worried that my honourable friend was going to be so upset by the rumblings in his own party that he was going to leave and not be here in this House with us. I would say to my honourable friend: They may not like him, but we do like him on this side of the House.

I am glad my honourable friend asked that question, because I think he understands the significance of this initiative. As my honourable friend will know, this government believes in improving the quality of education. We started some time ago in bringing the student-teacher ratio down in grades 1 and 2. We will be continuing in the long term with offering child care to five-year-olds and four-year-olds. Many

of the studies, my honourable friend will be aware, say that it has a significant impact on their capacity to learn. This is a significant new thrust forward.

My friend has done some research over the last couple of minutes to give him some new insights into the significance and importance of this program. Let me say that it was worked out in quite significant detail and at the appropriate time in this House the minister will stand, in conjunction with the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon), and give him all the details, and I am sure he will stand up and squeal with delight.

Mr Brandt: The Premier has made my day and I am so delighted to hear that he likes me. I just cannot tell the members how that has fulfilled all of my aspirations for this day's question period.

I have not as yet heard an answer to my question, however, so I will help the Premier with some of the research that has been done in connection with the cost of this program.

The analysis that we have taken on this side of the House would indicate that the 50,000 spaces that are going to be required to fulfil the Premier's commitment are going to cost a minimum of \$162 million and probably considerably more than that by the time all of the program is fully implemented.

I would simply like to ask the Premier one more time—it is a very simple question: Is it his intention to have his government, the province of Ontario, pay the full cost of the program or does he intend, through the kind of unique approach he uses to some problems over there, to introduce perhaps a new lottery that he could call Kidtario or something like that?

Hon Mr Peterson: That is the most creative idea my friend opposite has had in a number—we will write that down and we will study it, but we do not believe in funding education through lotteries, as my friend obviously does. But I do appreciate his idea.

I can tell him that this program, like all the other ones, will be funded appropriately, by a very generous and insightful and thoughtful Treasurer, at the appropriate time.

Mr Brandt: The Premier may think that is an adequate answer. I have asked him whether or not his government is prepared to pay for the cost of the program he is introducing.

I want him to know that an analysis of the promises he has made through his Minister of Education (Mr Ward) to date would indicate that the government has broken a number of promises which total some \$3 billion. That is what has

happened under his government. We have another promise which is heaped upon that—\$3 billion in broken promises.

Very simply, is it the Premier's intention to hold to his commitment to fulfil the costs of what this program is going to cost—obviously he has analysed it; we do not have to wait for the Treasurer's budget to find out this information—or is he, one more time, going to shove the cost of these programs on to local boards of education?

1420

Hon Mr Peterson: I say to my honourable friend, of course we are going to fund it appropriately. It will all be in the budget when the Treasurer brings it forward and the member will be delighted.

Mr Brandt: Appropriate funding in the past has been raising taxpayers' costs at the local level far too frequently.

ROUGE VALLEY

Mr Brandt: My next question is to the Minister of the Environment. I would like to pursue, if I might, the same question with respect to the Environmental Assessment Act and the minister's proposals in regard to the Rouge Valley.

The minister will be aware that the greater Toronto area, which is studying this entire matter at the moment, may well make a recommendation today in connection with the Rouge Valley and its use as a possible dump site. Within the last week, the Minister of Skills Development (Mr Curling) indicated, in remarks that were attributed to him, that the province of Ontario intends to protect the Rouge Valley. By that, I would take it to mean that he will protect the Rouge Valley against a dump site and also against the possibility of a highway being constructed in that particular area. Will the minister today confirm to this House that it is his intention to undergo a complete environmental assessment—the answer to that question which he did not respond to when it was raised by the opposition party—and will he in fact indicate that his government is prepared to do everything possible to preserve the Rouge?

Hon Mr Bradley: As the member would be aware, the Premier (Mr Peterson) has said on a number of occasions that the government of Ontario will in fact be protecting and preserving the park land in that area. He would be aware as well that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr Kerrio), under the auspices of his ministry and through the conservation authority, has provided a good deal of money already for the purchase of land and for the operation of a park.

We, as a government—and I am sure I am speaking on behalf of my colleague the Minister of Natural Resources, who has jurisdiction over parks—as the Premier has said intend to have the valley protected for park purposes. That is the policy of this government. A number of discussions are taking place; the municipalities have been involved; the conservation authority has been involved; there has been some public involvement in terms of residents of that particular area who have given input. At an appropriate time, the government will make an announcement as to its policy in the entire area.

I know the member shares with our government the feeling that the Rouge Valley is rather a unique place, and that we intend to preserve it as an urban wilderness area.

Mr Brandt: I can recall, with some degree of interest, the response of the now Minister of the Environment whenever the environmental process was bypassed for whatever reason when he sat in opposition. Here we have one of the most sensitive parcels of land left in the greater Metropolitan Toronto area and we cannot get a straight answer out of him as to whether or not he will make sure that the application of the environmental assessment process is fulfilled to the letter of the law.

Since he will not answer that question, will he answer the question in regard to the offer that was made directly to him by the federal government in connection with a \$10-million park? Is he now prepared, since he is constantly indicating that the federal government is not prepared to enter into a partnership with him on various programs, to commit that he will enter into a partnership with the federal government to develop a proper park land in the Rouge Valley?

Hon Mr Bradley: I am going to talk about it positively. I do not want to sound negative on this day. There is a new federal Minister of the Environment to deal with, so I will try to be very positive about this.

We see that \$10 million as an excellent deposit on the ultimate cost of the development of this area. I remember when the previous minister, Mr McMillan, came to that part of the province and indicated his support. I expressed at that time again, as did the Minister of Natural Resources, happiness that the federal government was prepared to begin to involve itself financially in such an undertaking. We welcome it. But I think the minister who is responsible for parks would indicate to you that the final cost of the acquisition of land and the appropriate looking-

after of the area would be several times the \$10 million which has been suggested.

Please let me say that I think it is an excellent start. We welcome them in joining in the program that the Premier and the Minister of Natural Resources have announced to retain this area for park purposes. We welcome their contribution to our plan, and if they wish to bring more money—

The Speaker: Thank you. Final supplementary.

Mr Brandt: I want to try one more time to see if the minister will in fact respond to a very direct question in connection with the ultimate use of that property and the process that will be used in order to reach a decision acceptable to all of the councils that surround the Rouge Valley, in response to the interest they have expressed directly to him by indicating they do not want a dump in that particular area.

I want to ask the minister a very clear and very simple question: Is he prepared to require that the full environmental assessment process be fulfilled with respect to any undertakings in the Rouge, or is he going to continue to dance verbally and hope that he can get off the hook on this somehow so he does not have to respond in terms of specifics? What is the intention of his ministry? It is a very simple question.

Hon Mr Bradley: There has been some speculation that the member has referred to as to what might take place in that area. It is probably inappropriate to comment on that kind of speculation.

I have seen no such proposals coming forward for the Rouge Valley at the present time, other than the park land proposal, which the Premier and the Minister of Natural Resources have made reference to.

I think the proposal that I have seen that the member makes reference to, which is speculation, is in fact not one which is in the Rouge Valley. I think he is talking about some lands which are in Scarborough at that point. I would say that there will be a very careful assessment of anything that is brought forward for the purpose of development of any facility in that area. It must meet all of the requirements of the Ministry of the Environment as it relates to the environmental assessment process and as it relates to all aspects of any proposal that would be brought forward. There will be a public hearing under the auspices of the Environmental Assessment Board, as there is in these instances. I imagine that would be the case for any proposal that is brought forward.

KINDERGARTEN

Mr R. F. Johnston: My question is to the Minister of Education and regards the rather limited goals set for kindergarten, which turn out to be even less significant than we had thought.

The minister must be aware that the vast majority of school boards around the province already have the programs he is talking about, and the majority of the ones that do not are the growth boards, which cannot accommodate them.

I want to ask a question around half-day junior kindergarten as it relates to the York Region Board of Education. They estimate that 20 per cent of their schools cannot accommodate one more portable. Therefore, they have to consider enormous renovation costs to do what the ministry is requesting, because it is not putting money into this. They either have to bus junior kindergarten kids from one part of their ward to another or provide inequality of access, depending on their growth areas, to their existing areas. What is the minister suggesting those boards to do with this particular announcement that came out yesterday?

Hon Mr Ward: I am delighted that the member for Scarborough would raise the issue of this very important initiative, one that I believe represents a very important investment in our future in this province.

Many boards throughout Ontario have been offering junior kindergarten programs; very few, I might add though, have full-day senior kindergarten programs, only nine out of 178 boards clear across the province.

There is no question that these initiatives will have associated with them significant costs, but over the course of the past year and a half, having listened to parents throughout this province and having received input from teachers and very many other interested parties, I believe it is essential we proceed. I believe the people of this province are prepared to pay the costs associated with this initiative.

1430

Mr R. F. Johnston: The minister has his head in the sand when it comes to these growth boards and their terrible problems of space. Let's deal, if we can now, with the issue of full-time senior kindergarten. Talking to Ms Parrish of the Peel of Board of Education, which has 558 portables on hand at the moment I remind the minister, she estimates that to go to full-time senior kindergarten in that board alone would cost \$77.5 million.

I was trying to think of my second supplementary. Ms Parrish gave it to me and I would like to pose it to the minister on her behalf. What the hell are the growth boards going to do now that the minister has raised everyone's expectations to levels which cannot be met?

Hon Mr Ward: I point out that the member should know by now that this government has participated in a very large way in trying to help local boards of education meet their accommodation needs, a responsibility that does rest with local boards under the regulations and statutes of this province. I will let the figures speak for themselves.

In the last two years, our allocations have created space for an additional 120,000 students during a period of time in which total enrolment growth in Ontario has been 45,000. Sure, it will take some time to meet the backlog of needs, but the member will know that even in the growth regions our allocation program is producing additional accommodation at a much greater pace than the pace of enrolment growth.

I also point out to the member that many boards within those growth regions in fact do offer junior kindergarten programs, because they have made a choice at the local level that these programs are indeed important. I believe they are important to the 50,000 parents of 50,000 four-year-olds in this province who do not have access to these programs. I do not think their ability to access this program should be limited to their ability to pay the costs. They should be available for each and every child.

The Speaker: New question, the member for Burlington South.

Mr Jackson: My question is also to the Minister of Education.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Then why are you not changing the Education Act to mandate four year old attendance?

The Speaker: Order. The member for Scarborough West has asked a question and a supplementary.

Mr R. F. Johnston: I'm sorry; I promised the Speaker I would not heckle today.

The Speaker: You did. New question, the member for Burlington South.

Mr Jackson: I am going to ask basically the same question, and we will keep asking these questions until we get the answers. Yesterday in its throne speech, the government stated that the federal government must honour its funding commitments to joint programs. That seems to contradict exactly the practices of the provincial

government with respect to funding commitments for local school boards.

Last Friday, the minister announced school capital allocations in the Halton region, and we find out now that 50 per cent of all the new capital allocations for schools, for new classrooms, must come out of the local ratepayer. We want to know, now that the government wants the Halton Board of Education to introduce junior kindergarten programs where those programs are not being provided, where is the minister going to get the additional classroom spaces to implement those programs? Where is he going to put those children and who is going to pay for those programs?

Hon Mr Ward: As I indicated in a response to the previous question, the member knows full well that this government has participated very substantially in a program to assist boards meet their capital needs. It seems the member for Burlington South has a very short memory. Let me take him back to his days as a trustee with the Halton Board of Education when, some five years ago, that board embarked on a \$35-million expenditure plan, all at local taxpayer expense because the government of the day would not participate in capital programs.

The government of the day had, over five years, an expenditure level that was less than the annual commitment to boards given by this government, given because we believe it is appropriate and the needs of our children come first in our school system. Frankly, we intend to meet the needs that are out there. We intend to ensure this program is fully implemented in every region of this province and we intend to provide the support necessary to see this is done.

Mr Jackson: The numbers thrown around by the Minister of Education certainly are not designed to illuminate the truth of what is happening in capital allocations to school boards. In fact, what he will not put in any of his press releases is that he is \$163 million late with the flow of that capital money. That speaks of the strength of his commitment.

If we can go back to Halton, on Friday, he announced \$23 million worth of new schools and renovations for that board. On that same day, the minister unilaterally reduced the percentage contribution that comes from his government and he did that without prior consultation. As a result, \$11 million is now going to have to be raised by local taxpayers with what he calls long-term debt financing. Since the kindergarten initiative is dependent on finding new classroom spaces, is it not just another one of his sexy

Liberal promises that is going to be built entirely on the backs of taxpayers from their wallets?

Hon Mr Ward: I would just say to my friend how short his memory is and take him back once again to his days as a trustee in the region of Halton when all those costs were being borne by the local ratepayers. Last week, it was my pleasure to announce a program that will generate \$1.1 billion worth of school construction in this province.

I do not think we should lose sight of the fact that over the course of the past three years alone, some 200 new schools have been under construction in this province and that enrolment in all our schools is still some 200,000 students less than it was in those schools just 10 years ago. It will take some time, I will acknowledge, to make up for some of the backlog of needs that has accumulated over the years for some strange reason, but I can tell the member that we will continue to provide that support to local boards to meet the needs of all the children in this province.

DISCLOSURE OF ADOPTION INFORMATION

Mr Michlash: I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. In 1986, when adoption disclosure amendments were presented to the Legislature for first reading, the minister spoke of a need to strike the best possible balance between the right to individual privacy and the right of adoptees to know about their past. We all favour a more open approach to adoption disclosure. However, I am concerned that adoptive parents do not receive the kind of support that has been so appropriately provided to the adoptee and the natural parent.

I would therefore like to ask the minister if he would consider providing counselling to adoptive parents in recognition of the fact that sensitive information about an adoption can be disruptive to the family unit.

Hon Mr Sweeney: When we made the changes the honourable member speaks about, we indicated clearly, with respect to the final decision that would affect the birth parent and the adult adoptee in terms of the opportunity to have a meeting, that it would require the consent of only those two. That was a change from the previous legislation which also required the consent of the adoptive parent.

However, we indicated at that same time that the range of services that was contained in those changes would be available to any party to the adoption process. That certainly included the adoptive parents at that time and certainly

includes them today. We are not in any way suggesting the adoptive parents should be left out of the procedure. The only change we made was to not require the active consent of the adoptive parent. But as far as counselling services are concerned, that is certainly available to the adoptive parents as well.

Mr Michlsh: I thank the minister. My question is, how are the adoptive parents made aware of the availability of these counselling services?

Hon Mr Sweeney: That does pose a small problem because the present procedure calls for the adult adoptee and the birth parent to have both registered their names on the adoption register. When that happens, they are both approached by staff of my ministry and asked whether or not a reunion is desired. If they say yes and if they both give their consent, that is done. There is no requirement in the existing legislation to involve the adoptive parents in any similar way.

However, any adoptive parent, I am sure, would be aware of the fact this process is under way. A simple request from any office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services would bring the necessary counselling support if that is what they would require.

1440

AMBULANCE SERVICES

Mr B. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Health. I am sure she will know that my colleague the member for Riverdale (Mr Reville), my friend the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr Pouliot) and I went to a number of communities on James Bay last week. It was a revelation to the three of us. We spent four days in a number of communities, talking about health care and a number of issues, but focusing especially on health care.

I would like to ask the minister a question about Attawapiskat, a community she knows because she visited it herself. A coroner's jury reported earlier in 1989 on the tragic death of a young woman named Rita Koostachin who died in June 1988 after falling off an all-terrain vehicle. It took six hours for her to be properly transported and cared for.

When the minister was in Attawapiskat, she received a letter from the chief and the band which outlined a number of areas of concern. One of these specifically was the question of why there are no ambulances in this community, and I might point out to the minister there are no ambulances in any of the communities we visited.

The second recommendation of the coroner's jury in the death of Rita Koostachin is that there should be an ambulance vehicle that is associated with the hospital, that is attended by professionals and that is there on a 24-hour basis. There are over 1,000 people in this community. It is completely isolated.

I wonder if the minister would not now agree, after the tragic death of Rita Koostachin and the report of the coroner's jury, that it is now time to provide ambulances for these communities.

Hon Mrs Caplan: As the Leader of the Opposition knows, I was in Attawapiskat and I am aware of the conditions there. What I have said very clearly to our native communities is that while we do not wish in any way to interfere with their aspirations or enter into any kind of jurisdictional dispute with the federal government, we have appointed a native health coordinator within the ministry to help us meet the needs of the native communities in this province.

Mr B. Rae: The appointment of another civil servant is, I am sure, going to cause joy and celebration to spread all throughout north of the 50th parallel. In fact, I am sure as they hear this news, they are cheering on the shores of the Albany River and on the Attawapiskat, right across up to Hudson Bay. That is not the issue. The question is, what are the services that are going to be provided in these communities?

I asked a very specific question to the minister. She was asked that same specific question when she was there last summer. We now have a coroner's jury that says an ambulance is essential in order to save lives and advance the interests of people whose lives are threatened because of the absence of services.

I want to ask the minister specifically, why is there now no ambulance service in Attawapiskat? Why is there no ambulance service in Fort Albany? Why is there no ambulance service in Moose Factory? Why is there no ambulance service in Kashechewan? What is she going to do to see that there are ambulance services in these communities?

The Speaker: Order. There are four questions there.

Hon Mrs Caplan: As the Leader of the Opposition would know, the remoteness of the James Bay coast presents very special challenges to meeting the needs of the native people. We are very aware of that and I want to tell him that ministry officials are going to be in the James Bay area in May, meeting with the communities to discuss ambulance services specifically and the health needs of those communities in general.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Runciman: My question is for the Minister of Financial Institutions. I am sure many of us are intrigued by the decision-making process within this government and I think the Leader of the Opposition's call for the minister's resignation was quite appropriate. Although I consider the minister a friend, I do not think there is any question this whole issue has been terribly mismanaged by this government.

The basis for the minister's decision was common knowledge a year and a half ago. The standing committee on administration of justice—witness after witness—and his own study by William M. Mercer Ltd indicated there was going to be severe dislocation if they went ahead with their new rating criteria. I would like the minister to explain to taxpayers and consumers across this province why he waited until the last minute and why he wasted millions of their dollars by doing that.

Hon Mr Elston: The honourable gentleman is out looking for friends, having won the friendship of the Leader of the Opposition whose presence in Toronto awaits only his departure for Ottawa to replace Ed Broadbent. My friend the member for Leeds-Grenville is asking me about waste. I can tell him, as I told the other people who asked the questions, there is no waste involved there when you consider the amount of information we have generated to understand exactly what goes on inside a very complex insurance industry.

We have taken the industry apart section by section. We have looked at the components that have gone into the costs associated with the premiums we pay in this province and we have looked at those in a very technical and detailed manner, in a manner which we now know provides the consuming public of Ontario with information they never had before so that they can be wiser consumers in the purchase of their products. We have also found that in going through that entire process, it has moved our judgement as a government to look more towards product reform as a manner in which we will provide the protections required by the people of the province.

Our decision-making processes should not be any mystery to the member or to that other party. They should not be any mystery to the public. We want to protect the interests of the public. We want to protect the interests of the consumers of this province. We are doing so. In fact, we are committed to ensuring there is fair and equitable

protection at a fair and equitable price for consumers across Ontario.

Mr Runciman: I guess \$7 million of taxpayers' money flushed down the toilet is a Liberal example of money well spent. I guess if it goes to Liberal worthies and a so-called independent board that can be disregarded in a moment, that is well-spent money.

This minister knew a year and a half or two years ago as well that the only precedent with respect to the system the government put in place in Ontario was what has occurred in the state of Massachusetts. I want to talk about forward-planning. We know many companies are not writing auto policies in Toronto now. Thousands upon thousands of Metropolitan Toronto drivers could be forced into high-cost Facility Association insurance this summer in the coming months. I wonder, in terms of the minister's planning, is he simply going to scoff at the opposition again and say it is not going to happen, or is he doing any planning? How is he going to deal with this crisis that is probably going to face thousands of Metropolitan Toronto drivers this year?

Hon Mr Elston: I have tried to deal with the questions of the honourable gentleman, the member for Leeds-Grenville, in a reasonable fashion. I have to repeat, however, for the people of the province so that they understand what is happening, that there is no waste in that.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that the \$7 million that was spent has provided for us the detail, the background, the understanding with respect to the insurance industry in Ontario that is not so found in other parts of the land. In fact, we know what is going on inside the insurance industry now and we have decided that we will move to look more clearly at product reform. In fact, we have already taken several initiatives on the basis of the hearings.

The strange part about this is that when the member stands up and speaks to his public audiences, and when the members from that opposition party stand up and speak to the public, they use some of the material that was generated at the public hearings in front of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board to say, "We have to have reforms here, here and here," some of which we have already announced as a government, to move towards better driver education, better standards of control of accident costs and things like those.

In addition to that, we have moved further to refer to the board in a very public manner a review of products that may help us reform the

system to be even fairer in the appreciation of the problems created by automobile accidents. We are doing the work that is required for forward-thinking and for the protection of the people in the province.

TRANSIT SERVICES

Mr Faubert: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Last week, the Toronto Star carried an article that speculated about a possible announcement on the extension of the Spadina subway line to Sheppard Avenue, north from Wilson Avenue. In this article, it was mentioned that the province has said it prefers a York University extension to the Sheppard subway proposal. As has been well noted in the past, the Sheppard subway would provide the essential transit link between the Scarborough Town Centre and the North York Centre, as well as have the benefit of attracting commercial development on nodes across the route itself.

Can the minister advise the House if the government has established a preference between the Sheppard subway and a York University line?

Hon Mr Fulton: I thank the member for his question and his ongoing interest in the transportation needs around Metropolitan Toronto. He would be aware that last May in this House, and in other forums, we announced a transportation strategy for the greater Metropolitan Toronto area and the four surrounding regions.

He would probably be aware that today Metro Toronto council is debating some of the options that have been reviewed and presented within that document. One of them, of course, is the extension of the Spadina line. He would also be aware that, in that connection, some time ago we announced a million dollars' worth of funding to in fact ensure and protect the Sheppard corridor, not only within the defined area as outlined in the Network 2011 report but also in fact to extend that protection right through to the Scarborough Town Centre.

1450

Mr Faubert: I am pleased that the decision has not been made on the York University-versus-Sheppard line; but in addition to the protection of the right of way, can the minister advise the House what else has been done to ensure that the Sheppard subway remains the viable alternative that it needs to be?

Hon Mr Fulton: The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere will be well aware that there have been numerous negotiations ongoing with both the Toronto Transit Commission and

members of Metro council. Indeed, I met only recently with the various mayors and the chairman of the Metro corporation. We share an interest with them in getting on with needed transit projects within the Metro area. There is a variety of options available, on the table, well known to them and well known to the public, with three or four options. We consider the Spadina extension as proposed to provide perhaps the maximum number of options as we proceed. It does not in any way preclude an east-west link along Sheppard or any other location.

LUMBER INDUSTRY

Mr Morin-Strom: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources, in the absence of the Premier (Mr Peterson).

In yesterday's throne speech, the Liberal agenda for the province totally ignored northern Ontario and in particular one of the most important industries in northern Ontario, the lumber industry. This industry is under severe threat and in fact has lost, in the last week, another 800 jobs. We have heard of considerable losses, in fact in the home community of the Minister of Northern Development (Mr Fontaine), in Hearst, with the closure of Lévesque Lumber; in Sault Ste. Marie, where some 500 workers in the mills and woodlands associated with G. W. Martin have been laid off indefinitely as well.

The minister knows that the softwood lumber tax is at the heart of the matter. This government went along with that agreement. It has done nothing to put the funds that have come from that and that have gone to the provincial government back into those communities and back into that industry to ensure the long-term future of those workers. The Liberal response to the softwood lumber taxes has gone—

The Speaker: Order. That is a speech. Do you have a question?

Mr Morin-Strom: Will the minister tell us what he is going to do in order to ensure that workers in the lumber industry in northern Ontario will have a future in Ontario?

Hon Mr Kerrio: The comments that were made have absolutely no credibility. This government has made it a high priority to address the problems in northern Ontario. There has been a great deal of money expended to move my branch of forestry into northern Ontario, which is the first time that kind of initiative has been taken in the kinds of numbers that we are talking about. The fact of the matter, and one point that the

member does make, is that the export tax is a major problem.

The other thing that he has said is absolutely not a matter of fact. This government has fought from day one not to go along with the export tax. We are not the only government in Canada to have taken that stance. Alberta stands just as firmly as we do in objecting to what the federal government did when it sold out our softwood lumber industry. I want to be fair and answer the questions the member poses; but they are so full of inaccuracies, how do I respond to something that does not make any sense?

The fact of the matter is that we stood firm against the 10 per cent. Alberta has. They have been trying to get us to put replacement measures in. We were not willing to do it.

Mr Wildman: Let's deal with reality. Tomorrow 300 mill workers and woodlands workers will be laid off at Lévesque Lumber in Hearst. There is nothing in the throne speech at all about northern Ontario, much less anything dealing with this government's response to the crisis in the lumber industry that has meant a total of 1,700 jobs has been lost. There is nothing from this government in the throne speech.

Can the minister explain why there has been this slap in the face to the mayor of Hearst, Gilles Gagnon, and to the workers in the lumber industry, in that the government has failed to respond to his request in a letter to the Premier (Mr Peterson) of 4 April 1989 when he pointed out the urgent need for assistance to ensure the lumber manufacturing industry in Ontario regains its competitive position? Why is there nothing in the throne speech outlining the steps Ontario intends to take for adjustment assistance for the industry and for the workers who have been hurt by the 15 per cent tax, since more sawmills are going to be closed in the future as a result of it?

Hon Mr Kerrio: There are a few things that have to be brought into perspective when one talks about this particular issue. I certainly am just as concerned as the member is, and many people on our side are, about the impact of the softwood lumber tax on our softwood lumber people, but that does not take away from the fact that this government has made a major commitment to planting, to aerial spraying and to some \$80 million spent last year to protect the forest from fire.

We have been very active in the important aspects of protecting our forests. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr Kwinter) has an involvement with restructuring and doing

some of the things that we can in order to address the problem of workers being displaced.

It is very high on my priority list. I would like the members on that side to know that it is a very important priority of this government to do everything that can be done for those people who are displaced.

Mr Wildman: Let's deal with reality.

Hon Mr Kerrio: If the member were really interested he would not be shouting at me. I listened to what he had to say and I think it is appropriate he should do the same on an important issue like this.

The Speaker: Order.

HOUSING

Mr Harris: I was hoping today that the Minister of Housing could enlighten us as to why the Liberal government is virtually ignoring Ontario's housing crisis. The throne speech is a document which lays out for one and all those directions and issues the government believes are important in the coming year. My question is: Why did the minister fail to make representation to the Premier to have housing included in this document?

Hon Ms Hošek: The member opposite knows very well that housing has been a high priority of this government for a number of years and, in fact, we have demonstrated our commitment to making sure there is action on the housing problem in a number of very concrete ways.

His question gives me the opportunity to detail them for the people in the House. As he knows very well, in the last budget the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) said there would be \$2 billion of Canada pension plan funds available for building nonprofit housing in this province. I have been all over the province in the last number of months announcing 21,000 units of nonprofit housing to be allocated and to be built.

There are groups of nonprofit volunteers from churches and ethnic organizations, Rotary clubs and legions all over the province right now who are involved actively in the building process as a result of the commitment this government has made to making sure the supply of nonprofit housing in this province is massively increased. So right now, all over the province, there are people planning and actively involved in building as a result of our commitment to housing.

Another thing we have been doing that is very important, I think, is working with the municipalities to make sure the supply of housing comes on stream more quickly and that our goals for making sure housing is affordable—

Mr Harris: I have in this hand last year's throne speech, where there were 14 specific housing thrusts that were mentioned as priorities of the government. I have in my right hand this document, the throne speech we heard yesterday. Not only does this speech ignore housing, it fails to mention a single accomplishment over the past year from the 14 specific thrusts that were mentioned here. I find this, quite frankly, rather bizarre. I would ask the minister this.

We want to know why there was nothing in the throne speech, and I think she owes this House an explanation as to why it was not in there. Was it because she does not believe there is a crisis out there? She reiterates the litany of what she is doing. Or is it that she acknowledges there is a crisis, but she really does not know what it is she should do about it, or does she simply not have the clout in cabinet?

1500

The Speaker: Thank you. Order. The question has been asked.

Hon Ms Hošek: The member opposite knows that our budget in the Ministry of Housing today is twice what it was in 1985-86. The reason the budget is so high is all the commitments that have been made and that are being actively acted upon right now.

If the member opposite were more in touch with what was going on in his riding, he might know that more than 240 families in North Bay are now benefiting from the fact that a low-rise rehabilitation program has rehabilitated their housing. He would know that there have been 265 subsidized units put into North Bay, in his very riding, in the past two years. That is up from 16 such units that were present when his government was in power—from 16 to 265 subsidized units.

If the member opposite is having trouble paying attention to all the things that we have been doing in the housing sector all over the province, I think that is a serious difficulty. We continue to pay attention to our commitment to housing and are working actively to build, to implement, to make very real the commitments that we have already entered into to make sure that the housing needs of the people in this province are more adequately met.

PETITIONS

PROPOSED BUILDING SITE

Mr R. F. Johnston: I have a petition which, as well as being made out to the mayor and council of the city of Scarborough, is in fact

addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

"To the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas high-density residential development is being proposed adjacent to an abandoned dump site near Gerrard Street East and Clonmore Drive in the riding of Scarborough West, we insist that a full environmental impact study be carried out prior to excavation and construction of the proposed project."

There are 138 signatures and I add my signature and my support.

SCHOOL OPENING AND CLOSING EXERCISES

Mr Pollock: I have a petition signed by approximately 800 people which reads as follows:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario"

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas we believe the amendments to regulation 262 relating to the collective recitation of the Lord's Prayer in open or closed exercises in public schools deprive many Ontario citizens of their established freedoms, we therefore object to the loss of our freedoms."

I have affixed my signature to this petition.

NATUROPATHY

Mr Epp: I have two petitions, one from a number of residents of Stratford. It reads:

"To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas it is my constitutional right to have available and to choose the health care system of my preference;

"And whereas naturopathy has had self-governing status in Ontario for more than 42 years;

"We petition the Ontario Legislature to call on the government to introduce legislation that would guarantee naturopaths the right to practise their art and science to the fullest without prejudice or harassment."

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Mr Epp: I have another petition from my own constituency with hundreds of names on it and it reads:

"We, the undersigned, ask that there be a moratorium on clear-cut logging in Ontario until the problems of soil erosion, soil compaction, gross waste of wood, inappropriate site selection and harmful effects on plants and wildlife have been addressed.

"We further ask that the following measures be immediately adopted:

"That public and private sector funding for reforestation programs be increased to allow both long-term monitoring and expansion of programs to a large enough scale for sustaining future forestry;

"That current monocultural methods of reforestation be changed in recognition of the known dangers of this approach;

"That logging companies be compelled, by law, subject to financial penalties, to monitor and maintain reforested areas."

SOUTH CENTENNIAL MANOR

Mr Pope: I have a petition addressed to the Lieutenant Governor and the members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg to petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government okayed renovations and staff increases to cover extended care services at the South Centennial Manor in Iroquois Falls, Ontario.

"That same government is now reversing its decision, after the completion of the project, and is planning to limit extended care services in the South Centennial Manor, which in effect, would place a number of our senior citizens, without choice, out of the manor and into the hospitals.

"We, the citizens of Iroquois Falls and surrounding areas, protest the Ontario government's decisions to limit extended care service in the South Centennial Manor."

It is signed by 1,242 residents of Iroquois Falls and I have affixed my signature to it.

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION

Miss Roberts: I have a petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that all teachers who retired prior to May 31 1982 have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than at the present seven or 10 years.

"The proposed amendment would make the five-year criteria applicable to all retired teachers

and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

There are 29 signatures and I have affixed my name to it as required by the rules.

SENIOR CITIZENS' APARTMENTS

Mr Harris: I have two petitions. One is to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas in 1973 the Ontario Housing Corp. constructed a senior citizen complex, consisting of a senior citizen apartment building situated at 135 Worthington Street West, in the city of North Bay; and

"Whereas it has come to our attention that senior citizen apartments have been rented to nonseniors;

"Be it resolved that we the undersigned support the establishment of a regulation whereby senior citizen apartments be made available to seniors only."

I have signed this petition and it is signed by a couple of hundred petitioners. It is the third such petition on the same subject that I have tabled in this Legislature.

TOBACCO TAX

Mr Harris: The second one is to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We would urge the provincial Treasurer and the government of Ontario to maintain tobacco taxes at their present level."

I have affixed my signature to that as well. This is signed by several hundred petitioners and, I am sure, it enjoys the overwhelming support of my colleague from Carleton as well.

NATUROPATHY

Mr Elliot: I have a petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads:

"We petition the Ontario Legislature to call on the government to introduce legislation that would guarantee naturopaths the right to practise their art and science to the fullest without prejudice or harassment."

There are approximately 70 signatures on this petition and I have affixed my signature to it too.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Mr D. R. Cooke from the standing committee on finance and economic affairs presented the

committee's report and moved the adoption of its recommendations.

Mr D. R. Cooke: Briefly, this is a report we feel is a focused report unanimously asking the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) to: first, consider in the budget the recommendations of phase 1 of the Social Assistance Review Committee; second, set up a cross-ministry, cross-budget analysis of what that accomplishes; and third, consider a permanent round table on social and economic policy. It also includes a number of taxation recommendations and a number of other areas that the committee feels should be given priority consideration in an upcoming budget.

On motion by Mr D. R. Cooke, the debate was adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mrs O'Neill from the standing committee on social development presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 194, An Act to restrict Smoking in Workplaces.

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker: Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

Mr Sterling: Committee of the whole House.

The Speaker: Some members said, "No, committee of the whole House."

Hon Mr Conway: The question, as I understand it, is the ordering of Bill 194 for the next stage. Certainly it was our expectation that it would go to third reading. I am interested, if anyone wants to illuminate me otherwise.

Mr Harris: I think the committee members will recall that the member for Carleton (Mr Sterling), who has very ably represented my party on this, indicated that he felt this bill should indeed come before committee of the whole House. He indicated at the committee stage that he would be asking for that to take place. Therefore, I suggest the next logical step for it to go through is committee of the whole House before proceeding to third reading.

Hon Mr Conway: I am taken a bit by surprise because I certainly do not recall—

The Speaker: Order. Is there agreement that it go to committee of the whole House?

Bill ordered for committee of the whole House.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr Elliot from the standing committee on general government presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Bill 170, An Act to revise several Acts related to Aggregate Resources.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

MOTIONS

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

Hon Mr Conway moved that the appointment of the member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr M. C. Ray) as deputy chairman of the committee of the whole House be continued for the second session of the 34th Parliament.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon Mr Conway moved that, notwithstanding standing order 71, private members' public business not be considered until the first Thursday following the completion of the throne debate and that the requirement for notice be waived with respect to ballot items 1 to 4 inclusive.

Motion agreed to.

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon Mr Conway moved that, notwithstanding standing order 2(a), the House shall meet at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, 27 April 1989 and Thursday, 4 May 1989.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PORT BRUCE BOAT CLUB ACT, 1989

Miss Roberts moved first reading of Bill Pr1, An Act to revive the Port Bruce Boat Club.

Motion agreed to.

CITY OF TORONTO ACT, 1989

Mr Kanter moved first reading of Bill Pr19, An Act respecting the City of Toronto.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION TO SET ASIDE ORDINARY BUSINESS

The Speaker: Pursuant to standing order 37(a), Mr Kormos moves that the ordinary business of the House be set aside, Wednesday, 26 April 1989, to discuss a matter of urgent and

pressing concern; namely, the crisis in auto insurance for Ontario drivers created by the government's incompetent and incoherent response to rapidly increasing insurance rates; namely, its rejection of public insurance in favour of an auto insurance board, which the government continues to undermine in the face of growing refusals by the industry to write insurance policies in Ontario.

I wish to inform the members of the House that notice was given in ample time; it was given on 20 April at 12:20 pm. Therefore, this motion is in order and I would of course listen to a representative from each party for up to five minutes discussing why this motion should be debated this afternoon.

Mr Kormos: It is essential initially to take a look at the position that the government has indeed taken with respect to the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board.

On 5 December 1988, the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr Elston) said in this House:

"I am quite prepared to leave the hearing and the determination of the rates with the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. They have proven in the past, with respect to their previous three hearings, that they do a very thorough and reasonable job...and in fact make recommendations where there is a deficiency of same upon which to make good and valid recommendations."

He further said, "The mandate of the board is to establish fair and equitable rates with respect to insurance." He went on to say: "We will then have the board making a determination for us. That is the mandate, the legislation speaks to that as the regimen under which we are operating, and that is in fact what we have at the present."

Further, on the same date, speaking again of the auto insurance board, the Minister of Financial Institutions said, "I expect that this hearing, which is starting next Monday...and which is open to all public participants, to be no less thorough and come up with what in effect will be fair rates in Ontario."

Two days later, the Premier (Mr Peterson) said in the House: "We are constantly trying to build a system that serves the consumers well. Obviously we look at the examples in other provinces—the problems of startup, the problems of rates, the political manipulation"—he said "the political manipulation"—"all of that kind of thing—and we think our approach is comprehensive and addresses the problem in a real way."

Once again speaking of the Ontario auto insurance board on 12 December, the Premier

said, "It is an independent board, there to represent the public interest."

Two days later, on 14 December, the Minister of Financial Institutions said that after the board conducts its hearing and sets its rates:

"Then not only will we be sure that the rates are fair, but that the people of the province are getting the coverage that insurance is designed to provide them in a reasonable manner, a cost-effective manner and in a manner which provides them with the coverage which they require to protect their interests in the event of accidents."

On 10 January 1989, the Minister of Financial Institutions had this to say, speaking of the board once again:

"They are carrying out that policy directive now, which is to look at the industry, examine it, study it, see what goes into setting rates and then set a range of rates. They are doing that now."

1520

On 26 January, the Premier in the House, again speaking of the automobile insurance board, said, "The independent board will make its own judgement."

On 13 February, the Minister of Financial Institutions, referring to the government, said, "We like the competitive marketplace." He said, "I think what the honourable gentleman would like to tell the people of the province is that he was wrong about the board in his criticism of it"—and he was referring to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr B. Rae)—"that he was wrong when he said it could not come to a fair and reasonable rate, that he was wrong when he said the hearings would not amount to anything."

Similarly, the Minister of Financial Institutions a short time later, 16 February, said it is important, "...to deal with the critical issue, whether we are under a public or private form of supply of auto insurance..."

Some \$7 million later, the board and its whole purpose, its whole mandate, having been scuttled—notwithstanding the comments of the Minister of Financial Institutions on 14 December which promised that there would be "coverage that insurance is designed to provide them in a reasonable manner...and in a manner which provides them with the coverage which they require to protect their interests in the event of accidents"—now the government is seeking an insurance company plan of no-fault insurance that is designed to limit and, in many cases, exclude the benefits that are provided to injured parties, one which even the insurance industry says will not produce the saving to the industry or

the benefits to Ontario drivers that the government is hoping for.

I am speaking specifically of the comments of Bill Star, president of Kingsway General Insurance Co. reported in the Toronto Star.

The Speaker: The member's time has expired. The member for Nipissing.

Mr Harris: I actually regret that I am on my feet today—perhaps everybody in the chamber as well regrets that I am on my feet—discussing this particular issue. I am somewhat of a traditionalist. I respect intensely the traditions of this Legislature and of Parliament and of parliamentary democracy. We are losing some of these traditions, I do not think for the good of democracy, little bit by little bit, piece by piece.

One of the traditions is the throne speech and the traditional moving and seconding of that throne speech, which would take place today. More exciting, of course, is the response the next day from the Leader of the Opposition and the response the following day from the leader of my party.

It is with a sense of regret that this is before us in this particular manner and it is with a sense of regret that I tell you I will support this motion that the debate proceed today, but I want the members to know that I do not come to that conclusion very comfortably or very easily.

The way this government has handled automobile insurance really is a shame. It is a crying shame that politicians have been asked, this minister has been asked, by the Premier to respond to a statement that he made back in 1987, when he said, "I have a plan to lower auto insurance rates." The Premier cannot be seen to have said something that is not fact. So then the great charade began, the hustle by his colleagues and his party to dream up something, when it is obvious that he did not have a plan, he was talking through his hat.

So \$7 million, a considerable amount of legislative time all went into a process to respond to this silly statement that the Premier made during the 1987 campaign. We saw minister after minister, we saw the Premier, we saw Mr Kruger stand up time after time. "This will work. You guys in the opposition don't understand what you're talking about. You're wrong. All the critics are wrong. Bob Rae is wrong. Bob Runciman is wrong. The leaders are all wrong. The insurance industry is wrong. The consumers are wrong. We know what we're doing. We're right."

We listened to that for a year and a half while the government bungled away \$7 million. When

precisely what happened is what we told the government would happen, it then—and why Mr Kruger did not resign, I do not know, other than that he is a Liberal crony, a hack bought and paid for by those people. He stood up time and time again and said: "This is an independent board. No politician interferes with this board. I will make the decision. The Premier said that; the minister said that."

Hon Mr Conway: It's vicious.

Mr Harris: You bet it is vicious. You bet it is, and it is vicious that we have to debate this today.

The Premier comes along at the last minute and cuts the rug out from underneath all the commitments he made and everything he said. He leaves no credibility with anything that he does as a government. Who can trust him when he does things like this?

Then he had an opportunity, after he changed the rules midstream and cut out Mr Kruger, to show us indeed what he planned to do. Where is the bill? Why is this not Bill 1? Why has he not come to the opposition and said: "Gosh, we made a terrible mistake. We're sorry. We apologize. You were right. We were wrong. We need to do something now to effect a change"? Why has he not come to us and said, "Could we debate this in the first couple of weeks"? We would have accommodated that.

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr Harris: He did not do that. That is why this motion is on the floor today.

The Speaker: Order. The member's time has expired. The government House leader.

Hon Mr Conway: I want to say at the outset that I have known the member for Nipissing for seven or eight years. I know him to be a vigorous debater but really quite a fairminded fellow. I hope that upon reflection, he will really think about what he said in so far as the person of John Kruger is concerned. I know that in the heat of debate we all say things—I have said things that, upon reflection, I have wanted to amend. I am not going to put words in anybody's mouth, but I really would ask my friend from Nipissing to think seriously about what he said about a public servant, who does not have the opportunity to come and defend himself in this chamber.

Having said that, I, like the member for Nipissing, am a traditionalist. Today we gathered to begin, or we thought we gathered to begin, a time-honoured tradition following the reading of the Lieutenant Governor's speech. From our point of view, we have come today to

hear two of our colleagues move and second His Honour's speech, a very important part of this legislative process. These members are prepared to begin that process today. I must say that it would be my preference to do as tradition would suggest and proceed in that fashion.

I have, in the course of this afternoon, talked to my friends, the opposition House leaders. I have indicated to them the concern of the government, that here we are on the opening day of the session, that is, the day following the reading of the Lieutenant Governor's speech, and we are asked to debate a motion for an emergency debate that has been with us over six days.

The date stamp here is 12:20 pm, 20 April 1989. This emergency debate request was placed in the Speaker's office over six days ago. I think that says something about the extent to which this is viewed as an emergency by the sponsors.

I know my friends in the New Democratic Party would say this is the first opportunity they would have to debate the question of insurance. I want to say to my friend the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr Kormos) that one of the really significant advantages afforded to members of the Legislature by the throne speech debate and the budget debate that will follow is that it is a general debate, in which all members will have an opportunity to stand in their place and address whatever issues interest them, quite frankly.

1530

Mr Hampton: Auto insurance.

Hon Mr Conway: I have to say to my friend the member for Rainy River (Mr Hampton) that if we had the throne speech debate beginning, there would be ample opportunity for the members of the Legislature, regardless of their party affiliation, to stand up here and address the insurance question or any other area where it is felt the government is doing either very well, or perhaps in the view of the opposition, not as well as might be imagined.

I do not take the request lightly. I want to make clear on behalf of the government that we want to get on with the business of the Legislature. I said earlier this afternoon to the opposition House leaders that we want an orderly process of events here. We respect the right of the opposition to take a vigorous part in these debates, but they have to understand that the government has a program that it wants to proceed with. I have to say that this throne speech debate we will begin soon will afford ample opportunity, as will the budget debate, for every member of the opposition to stand up and to say whatever he or she

wishes to say, within the rules, on any matter that is properly before the House at that time.

Having said that, I have a sense that if we do not allow this to proceed this afternoon, we might waste an afternoon's opportunity to proceed with the public's business. I have been home for six weeks and the taxpayers of Renfrew expect me to be here today, getting on with the public's business. I do not have the time or patience today to begin the session with opposition pyrotechnics that just waste public money and legislative time.

I want to say that recognizing the opposition's desire to debate insurance, we as a government will allow this debate to go forward this afternoon, quite frankly because I do not want to contemplate the alternative, which is wasting an afternoon on bell-ringing. But I want my friends in the opposition to know that we are here to do business, the business that was outlined yesterday, and they should not confuse patience for weakness on this side, because we are here to do a job and we intend to get on with that job.

The Speaker: We have now completed sections 37(a), (b) and (c) of our standing orders. Members in attendance have heard the pros and cons for this debate, I have now under standing order 37(d) only to put the question, shall the debate proceed?

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker: I remind members that they have the opportunity to debate this matter. Each member will have an opportunity to speak for up to 10 minutes. The debate will continue until we have run out of speakers or the clock will strike six. The first speaker will be the member for Welland-Thorold.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Kormos: If there are comments to be made about wasting taxpayers' money, then comments must be made about the \$7 million that was spent on the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board, which was scuttled on 16 April by the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr Elston).

At the same time, when one speaks of doing the right thing and doing the public's business, we have to be aware that it was only after a persistent campaign by the opposition, the New Democrats, that the minority Liberal government established that auto insurance board to determine insurance rates and to review premium-increase applications.

We have to remember that board is the creation of a Liberal government promise of 23 April 1987. The policy announcement of that day stated clearly that the steps announced by the

government—the creation of the board, among other things—were intended to benefit and protect consumers.

It was said then that the response to “shabby treatment in the marketplace” of consumers by the insurance industry was “inadequate” and that “in view of those circumstances, the government had decided that it was necessary to take immediate steps to protect Ontario consumers.”

On that day it was announced, on 23 April 1987, that a “series of legislative initiatives were being established to increase the fairness of Ontario insurance rates.” It was promised that an auto insurance board would be created. It was promised that the government would gain control and management of the motor vehicle statistical information base. It was promised that there would be a cap on rates until the insurance rate review board dealt with the rates applicable to the policyholders’ classification. It was promised that there would be the establishment of a consumer insurance bureau headed by an insurance advocate with a special focus on auto insurance. And that advocate, we were told by the government, would have the authority to appear before the rate review board.

Drivers in this province were told in April 1987 that “premium rates will no longer be determined in isolation by vested business interests,” that “consumer groups, individuals and the government...will be able to argue their cases during public hearings conducted by the board.”

Each and every one of those specific promises was specifically broken. Indeed, across the province, drivers not only feel a great sense of betrayal, but they express a great sensation of having been overtly and boldly lied to.

The control of the statistical database has remained very much with the insurance industry, and indeed problems with data and understanding the implications of the data have plagued the entire rate-setting and profit-setting process. The government took off the cap not once but twice, so that rates have increased by 9.2 per cent, prior to the most recent increase, since the so-called pre-election cap.

There was no consumer advocate, notwithstanding constant cries for one on the part of the opposition and an illustration of a need for one as the course of the hearings was under way. There was no submission from the government, no position set out by the government at all.

The board, as a result of that lack of direction, failed to recognize the original purpose of the legislation as it was set out in the original

announcement, because it was said then: “It is clear to the general public and it is clear to”—the government—“the automobile insurance rate structure is arbitrary. While overall profitability increases, some consumers continue to pay unjustifiably higher premium rates with no recourse for their shabby treatment in the marketplace.”

It was also said by the government that “in a system where automobile insurance is mandatory we must place the interests of the consumer first.” Well, that is precisely what the government and its auto insurance board have failed to do.

Indeed, in 1987, the Premier (Mr Peterson) knew car insurance rates were too high. In the four and a half years since 1983, premiums in Ontario increased by almost 65 per cent. That, no doubt, explains the promise the Premier made on 7 September 1987, one that has been quoted oftentimes in this House and elsewhere. He made a promise to the public that he had a very specific plan to reduce car insurance rates. Once again, that is a very specific promise that was very specifically broken. Indeed, drivers across the province have a very strong sensation of having been lied to.

The Ontario Automobile Insurance Board had the responsibility to interpret the legislation before it, quite frankly with a single fact in mind, and that was the original purpose of the legislation. Even according to its author, that purpose was to protect consumers and to place the interests of consumers first.

In its decision on profitability the board stated that the proposed underwriting margins are based on a balancing of the interests of consumers, investors and insurers. It remained, however, that the overriding consideration in determining rates was the factor of profitability.

It remains impossible to justify, as indeed at the time it was impossible to justify, the kind of return on equity that the board had accepted when one takes into account the extraordinary profitability of all the other aspects of the insurance business. According to the board’s own figures, the return on equity for all other business was 26.89 per cent for the year 1987.

In that the purpose of the legislation as it was originally proposed was to protect consumers, the board and the government betrayed those consumers by giving priority to the profitability of the private insurance industry. The board should have dealt primarily with the question of the impact of rate increases on consumers and should have made a quite different determination

on how Ontario's insurance industry should be run.

1540

Of course, much has been said about the way public plans operate, as opposed to the private insurance industry as we have it here in Ontario. Published evidence clearly shows that private industry spends far too much money on administration and litigation, compared with the more efficient and rational public plans. It also shows, taking the period from 1983 to the present, that rate increases in Ontario's private system have far exceeded those in public plans.

I recall questioning the Minister of Financial Institutions about the concerns we had as to the premium rate that a 65-year-old driver with 40 years' driving experience would pay in Scarborough, compared to the cities of Winnipeg, Regina or Vancouver respectively, especially when I discovered—it is common knowledge—that the rates are some 35 per cent, 50 per cent or 30 per cent less in each of those municipalities.

It was suggested it was a comparison of apples and oranges to suggest that a 65-year-old driver in Scarborough was somehow in the same category as a 65-year-old driver in Vancouver. Indeed, that suggestion is quite right. It is a matter of apples and oranges. It is unfair to compare a driver in Scarborough with one in Vancouver, because the accident rate in Vancouver is almost three times higher than it is in the city of Scarborough. Yet its premium rate for a 65-year-old driver with 40 years' driving experience remains some 30 per cent less than in the city of Scarborough.

The auto insurance industry has cried poverty for many years. It is remarkable that an industry that insists it cannot make any money fights so hard to maintain its hold. We do not have to look far to see where some of the exorbitant premiums that are being gouged out of drivers are being spent: \$1 million by the Insurance Bureau of Canada in its futile campaign in British Columbia to subvert the Insurance Corp of British Columbia; hundreds of thousands of dollars to date on its current campaign, glossy ads, television and radio, with its 1-800 number; over \$100,000 invested in Liberal candidates during the last general election; advertising campaigns, glossy booklets and brochures that are in the range of hundreds of thousands, if not millions of dollars.

It is remarkable, in view of the fact that public auto insurance was introduced in Saskatchewan as far back as 1946, that political parties which at the time were the opposition and opposed those plans—as they did in Manitoba and British

Columbia, since the introduction of those plans—formed the government and yet those same political parties have not dared tinker with or dismantle the public driver-owned nonprofit insurance plans in those provinces.

Why? Because they work, are more efficient and provide insurance that is affordable, that is provided fairly, that encourages good drivers to keep on being good drivers, and similarly, that discourages bad drivers by imposing higher rates.

The government has indicated that a public system is not being studied. Rather, it has thrown all of its cards on the table and relied solely upon a no-fault system that the insurance companies advocate, one which is designed to increase profits—

The Acting Speaker (Mr Carrothers): The member's time has expired.

Mr Kormos: —for the insurance industry and in no way to reduce the premiums or with a view to fairness or affordability to drivers in the province.

Mr Runciman: I, as well as my colleague the member for Nipissing (Mr Harris), regret having to deal with this matter at this time and in some respects going against the traditions of the House. But as a party we felt we had to support the motion because indeed this is an emergency situation, certainly in the minds of the members of the opposition parties, and I believe in the minds of a great many members of the public. The auto insurance fiasco is perhaps the most telling example of the leadership vacuum in this province. What has happened in the past number of weeks has been a very serious blot on the reputation of the Minister of Financial Institutions, a reputation, I might add, that has been so carefully cultivated over the past year or so.

I mentioned earlier in the question period that I like the minister and respect him, but in this instance he has very seriously fumbled the ball. He has to take the heat for what happened. He is the minister. He had to be hit between the eyes with a two by four before he took some action.

He has the unmitigated gall to stand in this House today and say that he was doing it in the best interests of consumers. Let's face it, he was doing what he perceived to be in the best interests of the Liberal Party of Ontario. He does not really give a damn about consumers, and the action or lack of action that he and his colleagues have taken with respect to auto insurance in this province in the last two or three years is clearly indicative of that. There is no question about it.

I believe quite sincerely that the minister should step aside. I very strongly support the suggestion made by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr B. Rae) earlier today. This has been terribly mismanaged. It has been incompetence of an unbelievable level, but at the same time this minister has the temerity to stand here and smile and joke and not admit that he has very seriously mismanaged this whole issue.

I want to support my colleague the member for Nipissing as well with respect to comments he made earlier about the need for the resignation of the chairman of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. The chairman has been quoted publicly as saying, "The minister may have knee-capped me on this, but if he hits me again I may consider resigning."

The fact is that was the second time this minister and this government had kicked the chairman in the teeth, if you will. We go back to the auto insurance issue with respect to seniors. The board made some very specific recommendations with respect to seniors. The government started to feel some political heat, did another flip-flop and came out with concessions, again undermining the credibility of this so-called independent board. Mr Kruger turned the other cheek on that occasion as well.

Here we have such a serious slap at that individual's credibility, not to mention the board's credibility. Months and months of work, millions and millions of taxpayers' dollars and the minister, within a day or two, overturns the whole thing, going against everything that he and his colleagues had said for months, going against what the Premier had said in chastising the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr Kerrio) who had the gall at the time to say, "This is exactly what is going to happen: the cabinet is going to overturn and we will have the final decision-making authority." The Premier gets up and publicly chastises the Minister of Natural Resources for making such a suggestion and what happens? It is exactly what the Minister of Financial Institutions does, throws all that work out the door.

We are not just talking about the \$7 million of taxpayers' money; we are talking about the millions of dollars that were spent by the insurance companies as well to go through the hearings process, to provide their submissions, to prepare their submissions. We are also talking about the millions of dollars spent by insurance companies in this province to convert their systems to be able to handle the new rating criteria the minister put in place.

Who is going to absorb those costs? The minister knows who is going to absorb them: Joe Consumer. Whether it is going to be through their home policies or through some other means, the consumers of this province are going to assume those costs. They are going to absorb those costs that the minister has placed on their shoulders, an additional burden on top of the \$7 million that the minister, through his incompetence, has placed on the shoulders of the consumers of this province. There is no other answer for it—sheer incompetence.

We can go back to Mr Justice Osborne's report, which I think cost the taxpayers about \$1.5 million. Again, the minister and this government did not have the patience to wait for Mr Justice Osborne. So what do we have? We have a report that cost millions of dollars put on the shelf, flushed down the toilet.

The Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr Wrye), the man who is supposed to represent consumers' interests in this province, can sigh and groan. Where was he around the cabinet table with respect to the way Mr Justice Osborne's report was treated, flushed down the toilet? Where was he with respect to the \$7 million of taxpayers' and consumers' money flushed down the toilet? Where was he with respect to the millions being spent by insurance companies that consumers will have to shoulder in this province? He was not representing their interests. If he was, he did not do a very effective job.

1550

We can go back to the way this whole matter has been dealt with from the outset. We can talk about the Premier's commitment in September 1987 that he had a very specific plan to lower auto insurance rates in this province. Where is that very specific plan? I guess that went down the toilet with the millions of taxpayers' dollars. He did not have a very specific plan. He misled the people of this province, and that is going to come home to roost. Those guys can make all of these ad hoc, seat-of-the-pants, crisis, panic-driven decisions, but ultimately they are not going to be able to avoid it. They misled, they deceived the people of this province, and that is going to come home to roost at some point in the future.

I want to talk about another aspect, which the minister would not even deal with in question period this afternoon. Again, it deals with their forward planning or lack of forward planning, lack of foresight. They really do not know where the devil they are going on this issue. But we

know that many drivers in Metropolitan Toronto, for example, are going to be faced with increases, despite the cap he has placed on it, because auto insurance companies are simply not going to write policies in Metro. The return is not adequate, so they say.

What are we going to do? We are going to see those drivers forced into the high-priced facility. He does not have an answer for that. He does not know how he is going to deal with it. Again, he is going to have to be hit between the eyes with a two by four. We are going to have this seat-of-the-pants kind of decision announced Wednesday after cabinet that we are going to do something else that is devastating to the long-term interests of the consumers of this province. That is the way they act, that is the way they manage. It is very disturbing, to say the least.

All of this information was available a year and a half to two years ago. I went through the standing committee on administration of justice hearings. We had witness after witness tell us what was going to happen. We had a report commissioned by Mercer, by the justice committee and by the government, which told us exactly what was going to happen.

I can read a quote from a speech I gave in February of this year: "The really important element politically is the impact of the government's decision to forbid insurance companies from classifying risk on the basis of age, sex and marital status. That decision will mean rate increases of up to 82 per cent for some young women, and some of our seniors will see increases of up to 60 per cent."

This was no secret. It was right out there, laid in front of this minister, laid in front of his cabinet colleagues months, even years ago. He waits until the last minute, after they have spent \$7 million of taxpayers' money to make a decision that is totally inadequate, totally incompetent and totally unconscionable. He really has no excuse for the way he has dealt with this issue, no excuse that will stand up to scrutiny. That is the truth. As much as I regret saying it, that is the regrettable truth.

In any event, there is very little solace, if any, in saying, "We told you so," but if you go back to what happened on the last day of the justice committee hearings, what did members have thrown in front of their desks? We got an assessment of the situation in the state of Massachusetts the last day of our hearings. That is the only jurisdiction with a system comparable to what this government brought in in this province. What it spelled out to all of us at that

time, if we cared to spend any time reviewing it, was sheer and utter chaos in the state of Massachusetts—60 per cent of their drivers in facility. Most of the insurance companies were out of that state. It was really a blueprint for the disaster that lay ahead in this province.

The minister and his predecessor did not have the intestinal fortitude to provide that study to the committee while we had an opportunity to really absorb the implications. They did not have the foresight to take a look down the road. Again, they have been acting in ad hoc fashion, by the seat of their pants. They really have no plan. Again, it is perhaps the most telling example of the very critical leadership vacuum that exists in this province.

Hon Mr Elston: I do not really know where to start first, whether to be critical of the acting lessons which my friend the member for Leeds-Grenville has obviously undertaken, and the result which they have given, or whether to be critical of the fact that the only real emergency which these two opposition parties are providing for the public of Ontario is whether the New Democrats or the Tories could upstage one or the other in getting forward this motion for debate.

The fact remains that in Ontario, the Liberal government moved with dispatch to put a cap on increases of auto insurance rates at 7.6 per cent. That is what those parties refuse to acknowledge has been a positive step for the consumers of this province. The consumers know that it has been a positive step for the consumers of this province.

In addition to that, we have taken the time to analyse exactly what it is we need to do with the insurance industry by taking a very serious look at what has taken place in front of a very public board with very public hearings, with material being put in front of it not only by members of the public at large and people who are in the actuarial business and take a lot of activity through insurance company writing and advice but also from politicians like the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr Kormos) and the member for Leeds-Grenville (Mr Runciman). Those people have been there and they have put their case. We have seen a very public discussion, a very public analysis of an industry which is very important in delivering a service to the people of the province. We have seen that and we have taken the steps that we deem appropriate to protect the consumers.

Part of the process was to take a look at how rates were established, to see exactly what components went into the establishment of the price of the product, to see where there could be

improvements made. In fact, we have already announced a series of initiatives designed to assist us in dealing with improvements.

The difficulty for the people of the province is that the opposition parties refuse to acknowledge the positive steps taken forward by this government. Now, that is their job. They can be animated in their criticism. They can call for resignations of ministers who stand steadfastly in support of the interests of the consumers of this province. I do not mind their being animated, but I do mind the fact that they put the whole case as to what has gone on in front of that board. They refuse to admit the value of the deliberations of that board because they refuse to admit that they did not know what the insurance industry was about either. They refuse to admit the positive aspects of the studies which have come out and released to the public, in the broadest possible fashion, the details of the reasons why prices have been going up.

They refuse to acknowledge, as well, the fact that the decision we have taken is one of good common sense because we are determined to have product reform in Ontario so we can be assured that there is reasonable and fair compensation available to those people in the province who, as a result of automobile accidents, are disadvantaged.

They have failed to realize that we have made a determination that it would be silly to penalize consumers and companies in implementing a plan which would not have an effect a few months down the road after we deal with product reform.

They can criticize us if they will. I do not mind criticism. It is a business that results in criticism when you make positive moves to protect people.

They want to do it one way in the New Democratic Party, by taking it over. We are not sure about the third party. We do not know what they want to do. One day the member for Leeds-Grenville is a friend of the member for York South (Mr B. Rae); the next day he is trying to separate himself. We do not know whether they want public insurance, private insurance or no-fault insurance.

In fairness to the member for Leeds-Grenville, he is not like my friend the member for Welland-Thorold, who wants everything in insurance. He wants people to be able to sue, but he wants no-fault benefits. He wants a whole series of issues which just are not compatible in one product.

The NDP has wanted it all for a long time, and that, of course, is what this issue is about. It is

about people with a series of shopping lists who are prepared to say outrageous things so that they can unsettle the minds of the consuming public in Ontario, so that the people can be distracted from what the real purpose of this government is.

The real purpose of this government is to provide reasonable compensation for those people who are, as a result of automobile accidents, able to receive fair and reasonable compensation; to the best of our abilities to put them back in a place where they would have been if the accident had not occurred.

We are doing that, and we want to examine the rationale behind product reform in a stable and very sensible fashion. These people want to make it into some kind of emergency so that they can distract the people, so that the people will not be able to analyse thoroughly, as we wish them to do, their options as we look at product reform to bring them a new regime which will help them and assist them in the purchase of a very necessary product in Ontario; that is, insurance against damage by automobile accident. I am committed to that.

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Those people, I know, are opposition people and they wish, the best they can, to cause a state of instability, so the discussions and deliberations can make the whole process look mismanaged in some ways. And, of course, they claim mismanagement for their own personal benefit. They say there is no benefit to the expenditure of some millions of dollars. There are benefits to the expenditures of those millions of dollars.

We know about the insurance industry. We know what costs are related to accident claims. We know now, as a result of some deliberations, what some of the product reform options provide for us in terms of benefits and some of the demerits.

I have asked the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board not to quit or to cease making decisions, but to continue on and also to hold public hearings, so a forum can be held where we can examine the merits and the demerits, if there are some, of the products which we placed in front of them to be examined.

Far from cutting away the authority of the board, I have given them a broader scope for playing a very valuable and important role in protecting the consumers of the province. This whole issue is about people. Sometimes, we forget that. We are trying to discover what product will provide the best support for the person who is injured or disadvantaged by accident.

Some people, like the New Democrats, would like public insurance, because they believe, no matter what the issue is, public is always best. They do not have a clue what it means. They do not understand what it will take. They try, the best they can, to say there are no subsidies provided by other provinces that have public insurance. They try to obscure, the best they can, the costs associated with establishing public plans and the costs that are associated with that which have to be borne by taxpayers.

Those people who are in the third party are not willing to understand exactly what the issue is about at all. They think it is about the insurance industry.

This man from the Leeds county area stands up and indicates he thinks, for some reason, there ought to be some better benefits in this for the purposes of the insurance companies. At one point, he talks about the benefits to consumers. Next time, "You put too many costs in the insurance companies." Where is he coming from? We do not now yet; his leadership material has not yet hit the street. But pretty soon we will find out.

All I am telling the people of Ontario, in the most direct fashion possible, is that, yes, we have spent money; yes, we have taken time; yes, we have studied the very public record about those items which are required for us to make sensible judgements in order to preserve, in the best way possible, fair compensation provisions for the people who are disadvantaged as a result of accidents.

That is where we are at. That is where we are moving. We have done it in a very public forum. I guess, if we were a covert government, none of this activity would be carried on, because the people would say, "What have you been doing?" since they would not think anything had been done.

We are doing it publicly. We are examining it publicly. Everybody can have his say. The member for York South contemplates moving off to Ottawa. The question is whether he will get there before the member for Oshawa (Mr Breagh) does—and they certainly are not going to get there together, as we understand their great affection for each other—the great question is, for me, fairness for the people of the province.

That is what I am striving towards. That is where I am putting my efforts. That is why I made that move forward to say that 7.6 per cent is the capped increase. That is why I am watching what is happening in writing the insurance in

Ontario. That is why I will continue to work for the benefit of the consumers here.

Mr Farnan: This is indeed an issue of consumer protection. The New Democratic Party is indeed the party for consumer protection. It amounts to which party you can trust to defend consumer interest. When the New Democratic Party speaks, it speaks consistently.

There is a difference between New Democrats and Liberals. When we say we have a plan, our plan is the same before an election and after an election. There is a very clear difference when the Premier of Ontario said in Cambridge, three days before the election, "We have a very specific plan to reduce premiums." There was no plan, there never was a plan, there still is no plan, and indeed the government is flying by the seat of its pants.

There is a problem, though. There is a problem with auto insurance. We will continue to fight this issue because we have received thousands and thousands of complaints about the system: complaints from small business owners, from young people, from ordinary working families hit with increase after increase.

It is not fewer accidents or a rural economy or government subsidies that give people with driver-owned plans a fair and affordable car insurance system, and it is not greed by Ontario drivers that causes the problem here. Driver-owned plans provide massive savings. These plans are more efficient, putting the interest earned on investment back into the system to reduce premiums significantly. The nonprofit nature of the driver-owned system saves motorists millions of dollars.

That is what consumer protection is: giving the drivers of Ontario a better deal. The drivers of Ontario understand that; if New Democrats say, "We will provide auto insurance at a cheaper rate by plowing back the profits of insurance to reduce premiums," that makes good consumer protection legislation, and that is the difference between New Democrats and Liberals.

Ontario drivers deserve better. The drivers of this province deserve an auto insurance system with fair, affordable rates; one which rewards good drivers by making sure they pay less, one which treats drivers fairly and one which provides insurance at affordable rates.

We remain committed to driver-owned public auto insurance in Ontario. The driver public cannot afford any more broken promises.

Auto insurance continues to remain a problem, especially for the Liberals, because they have difficulty with these three simple words, just to

say, "We were wrong." How simple it would be if they could say, "We were wrong," or four simple words, "The NDP was right."

The reality of the matter is that auto insurance poses a problem for the Liberals because basically it does not fit into the established Liberal pattern of solving problems. It is very difficult for the Liberal government to pass on this responsibility to municipalities, for example. It does not fit easily into that package. Or it is very difficult to have a concept of an Autario lottery for auto insurance. The two basic solutions for Liberals of giving it to municipalities or having a lottery just do not solve the problem.

It is probably little consolation, but New Democrats at this time can say quite clearly, "We told you so." I want to read into the record what happened when the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board was being established. I said at that time in the House:

"I think we can give a guarantee to the consumers out there, to the drivers out there, that we will continue to fight. New Democrats will continue to fight. The fact that this bill passes today is not the end of the battle; it is the beginning of the battle. But the battleground has changed because up to now, when the drivers of Ontario were getting upset, when the drivers of Ontario were getting those extra premium increases and when the drivers of Ontario were angry, they were angry with the insurance industry.

"But believe me, from today, after the bloated Liberal majority files in and sheepishly passes this bill, not only will the drivers of Ontario be looking at the insurance industry, they will also be looking at this government, which has been a partner in the betrayal of the drivers of Ontario."

There has been a window into the industry, but the window into the industry furnished by the rate review board was a window in which only two partners were allowed to look: the auto insurance corporations and the Liberal Party. They had a commitment to the auto insurance industry, and that particular commitment was based on the fact that the auto insurance industry, prior to the election, in the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario newsletter, said, to a great degree, "Both the Liberals and Conservatives have been defenders of the industry. We can put our trust in them."

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Indeed, the Liberal Party did not let them down. Far from doing what they said, which was that they would reduce auto insurance premiums,

we had a 4.5 per cent increase, and now, after the auto insurance board met and it appeared that it would just go sky-high, the Liberals realized that the price they had to pay to their business friends was getting them into increasingly hot water.

We were hearing the possibility of 30 per cent, a million drivers with increases of 30 per cent; some increases of up to 80 and 90 per cent. Even the Liberals had to say to their big-business friends: "Hey, we can't stand this kind of heat. We're going to have to stop. We're going to put a 7.6 per cent cap on this."

The minister thinks this is something marvelous. Add up the increases in the 18 months and you are talking about 16.6 per cent. That represents increases far above the rate of inflation, at a time when the Premier in Cambridge said, "We're going to reduce the cost of auto insurance." The people of Ontario clearly heard what the Premier said and the reality of the matter is that premiums did not go down; they went up far above the rate of inflation.

At this stage, we have to consider the fact that the drivers of Ontario will ask themselves one basic question, because the drivers of Ontario are consumers. If I were a driver and I went to a store and the store were the Ontario government, and the shopkeeper in that store said: "I've got a deal for you. You do your business with me and I'm going to give you a reduced auto insurance"—because that is what he said: "I have a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance"—so they accepted the words of the Premier. They said, "Okay, let's put our faith in this group." They did and they elected 94 Liberals and immediately their auto insurance rates continued to go up, continued to escalate.

New Democrats have a store right next door and we are saying to those same people out there who voted and went to that particular Liberal store and put their auto insurance bucks on the line and found they were ripped off: "Next time, there is another store you can go to. It's right next door, but the difference between the two stores is that the store run by the New Democrats is honest. When we say we'll give you a deal, you'll get a deal, and when we say we have a plan, it'll be the same plan before the election as after the election." When we say we will take the profits from auto insurance and plow them back to reduce the premiums, people will understand that.

The one thing about consumers is that you cannot continue to rip them off, and both the insurance industry and its friends in the Liberal Party have done precisely that. They have ripped

off the consumers and now they are trying to dissociate themselves and put some distance between themselves and their big-business friends. The people of Ontario, the driving consumers of Ontario are going to say: "We want an honest broker. We're going to the New Democratic Party. They're honest. We'll get the deal we want." That is why they are going to come to the New Democrats.

Mr Villeneuve: I too am pleased to participate in this emergency debate, and it is an emergency debate this afternoon. There is an emergency out there. The Minister of Financial Institutions attempted to make this Legislature believe that it was an issue of protecting people when indeed it is an issue of politics pure and simple. I will be quoting a few statements that will really bring that into focus.

I see the Minister of Natural Resources is here this afternoon. He proved to be the best crystal ball gazer that we have here, because earlier this year the honourable minister told the Niagara Falls Review, a very good newspaper in that area, on 4 January 1989 that it is cabinet's prerogative to look at it and see what is acceptable and fair.

But of course at that time the Minister of Financial Institutions was busy telling the Legislature that:

"I am quite prepared to leave the hearing and the determination of the auto rates with the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. They have proven in the past, with respect to their previous three hearings, that they do a very thorough and reasonable job of analysing the material that is available to them and in fact make recommendations where there is a deficiency of same upon which to make good and valid recommendations."

That is the same board that cost \$7 million of the public purse and brought in its recommendations. In order to be more palatable politically, the Minister of Financial Institutions decided that cabinet would indeed have the last word in spite of what he had said on many occasions, that he was quite prepared to leave the hearings and the determination of the rates with the auto insurance board. The Minister of Natural Resources wound up again being right. I guess he may be right in more ways than one. However, he was correct in that situation: cabinet did have the final say, for political purposes pure and simple.

My concern is the following: I live close to the Quebec border and I see no-fault insurance operating in that province, operating through regular insurance brokers, the no-fault section

which looks after property damage and public liability. We have la Régie de l'assurance automobile du Québec which covers bodily injuries, and you pay for that through your licence plates and licence renewal.

Here in Ontario we have begun to tamper quite extensively with a system that is suiting the government for its political purposes and political reasons only. My big concern, as I mentioned before, is that we will have many drivers who will be told by their insurer, by their carrier that they are very sorry but because of the risk they present, they will not be renewed or they will not be accepted. Therefore, we will have these drivers going to facility insurance at exorbitant rates with really no protection at all. I can see this within the next year.

I wish the Minister of Financial Institutions could answer this one for me. What will I tell my constituents when they come to my office and say: "Look, I am sorry to bother you today, but my insurance agent has told me they will not renew my insurance. What happens to me now?" I will probably have to tell them that the reality is that there is no choice. You have to have insurance on your vehicle in Ontario and therefore the facility will be the only place you have to go. The facility will be expensive and the facility may even wind up being operated by the government of Ontario, depending on what sort of manipulation it puts in if the insurance companies decide to establish a facility.

The state of Massachusetts, I understand, has over 50 per cent of its drivers in the facility coverage because of risk factors. Therefore, I do not know what sort of politics will be played at the time when that reality comes forth.

I want to quote a senior vice-president of marketing with the Co-operators General Insurance Co, the largest insurer here in Ontario. William Weafer says his company expects the provincial move will increase its expected loss on car insurance in Ontario to as much as \$53 million to \$60 million in 1989.

"I think you will see quite a number of companies pulling back from the market," Mr Weafer said, and indeed that company already is not accepting new cases or new customers and will probably be looking at some of its existing customers as maybe higher risks than it wants to look at, and they may be told that their insurance is terminated.

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We will, in the short run, because of this government's unilateral move into that area, have the consumers say, "The government

protected us." It is what you might call short-term gain for long-term pain, and that is not quite the answer to the dilemma facing the car drivers of Ontario.

Ted Belton, chief executive officer of Pafco Insurance Co., predicted that the government's action would precipitate a crisis in the marketplace like we have never seen before. That is a totally different company, one that insures liability coverage for car drivers here in Ontario.

A significant number of Ontario motorists, mainly young men under the age of 25, are already having problems obtaining coverage in the regular auto insurance market at present.

Mr Speaker, I ask you what this unilateral move by this minister and by this government will indeed create. It will create havoc. You and I, as members of this Legislature, have some problems in dealing with the Workers' Compensation Board, for example. We are creating a situation that will be 10 times worse, because it is a small percentage of Ontarians who have to deal with the WCB. Every car driver in Ontario has to have insurance and therefore when drivers line up at your constituency office and mine with problems in that these people cannot get insurance through the regular channels that they have been used to having, you and I will have to face the music; face the consequences and try to explain the move that this government recently has made, capping at 7.6 per cent in a situation that will inevitably lead to chaos.

In conclusion, I hope this government has a more clear-cut mandate and more direction than simply coming in with a political short-term solution to the insurance dilemma. We will be facing major problems in this province within the year. Facilities may not even be able to cope with the type of demand that will be put on them, and certainly the cost will be prohibitive.

Hon Mrs Wilson: The importance of this issue of auto insurance on senior citizens in Ontario is one that we must not underestimate. For many seniors who drive, a car represents a vital link to the community: a lifeline for them, for those they care for and also for the lives of the many whom they enrich through their volunteer work.

For many seniors, a car is a necessity in carrying out the activities of day-to-day living: medical appointments, shopping, visiting with family and friends and the activities that add to the self-esteem and independence of older Ontarians. In small and rural communities, where there may not be public transportation,

seniors rely overwhelmingly on their cars to meet these needs.

Our government is committed to developing a system of insurance which ensures fair rates and fair compensation for all drivers. The government is looking closely at options for a system of no-fault insurance. In the meantime, the cap on rate increases will provide some immediate relief from unacceptably high insurance premiums.

I have met with representatives of the United Senior Citizens of Ontario, the Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizens' Organizations, Canadian Pensioners Concerned and the Canadian Council of Retirees. I have also received many letters and calls from individual senior citizens. All these seniors have expressed concern about the need for a fair and affordable insurance system to support their need for mobility and independence.

I have been particularly concerned about the impact of the proposed rate increases on seniors with low and modest incomes. The additional burden of substantially increased insurance rates is a burden that these seniors in particular would have found very difficult to shoulder.

The government of Ontario has recognized these concerns by capping rate increases for 1989 at 7.6 per cent. That will ease the burden of premium increases on seniors and others with low and modest incomes. Seniors I have met with have strongly endorsed the government's action in capping rate increases for 1989.

There is also a need for a fair compensation system, one that can respond to those on limited incomes in a timely fashion. Board hearings that are now under way are an important part of the process. Of course, senior citizens from across the province will be invited to take part in these hearings, and I know that they will take part.

In designing a new system of automobile insurance, the government will be particularly mindful of the concerns that are raised by our older Ontarians. Our goal is to develop a system that will be equitable for all drivers.

Mr B. Rae: I have listened to the speeches by the Minister of Financial Institutions and the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs (Mrs Wilson) with a sense that I must have been living in a different place.

To listen to the Liberals talk about this insurance fiasco which they have led us through over the last three years, you would think that indeed the last decision that was made by the minister, in a state of panic some 10 days before the House returned and in the middle of, I am sure, certainly judging by my own mail, what

must have been a barrage of concern in his direction, to make the statement that this is all part of some unfolding Liberal plan; that they have some keen sense; that back when they set up the insurance board, they knew exactly how it was going to emerge and that is why their decision to move in this particular direction, to take the panic decision they took 10 days ago, is all part of this consistent concern that they allege they have for the consumer.

I think the consumers of this province have been shafted, bamboozled, badly treated and badly deceived by the Liberal Party of this province. They could have had by now a better scheme, a fairer scheme, not one that would be free, one that everybody would have to pay for with premiums, but one that would be visibly seen to be fair.

I listened to the minister say to us on this side of the House that the New Democratic Party does not have a clear idea of exactly what it wants and that in fact the Liberal Party alone is capable of managing the system. The Liberal Party has demonstrated more incompetence, just sheer administrative incompetence in the handling of this insurance issue than any regime in dealing with insurance in Ontario's recent history. They have demonstrated an absolutely mammoth incapacity to come to terms with this industry, to come to terms with the facts of this industry and to understand the implication of the law which they themselves passed.

I hear the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs saying, "We wanted to protect consumers from the kinds of price increases which the insurance board was going to propose." What did she expect? How could she possibly have expected anything else when she stood and voted for the bill itself? It states right in the heart of the bill that the insurance board must consider the interests of the insurance companies in earning and retaining a profit.

The evidence before the insurance board was overwhelming that once the board had established that the insurance companies had a right to try to earn over 12 per cent as a rate of return this coming year, as opposed to what they had been making before, it was crystal clear to all of us that was the fuel driving the insurance rate increase, obviously in combination with the classification changes which have been amply debated in this House. That is what happened. It should be no mystery to the Liberal members.

I see members on the other side, allegedly with small business experience, members who are

lawyers, accountants, real estate salesmen. At one time, I think, the member for Guelph (Mr Ferraro) was one—excuse me, a banker. These are people with business experience. We all have great respect for bankers. There are travel agents, people around who have been involved in different fields of life.

This is the Minister of Natural Resources, whose business experience and acumen is renowned throughout the province, certainly as far as Port Colborne.

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This is the business government that has supposedly demonstrated its business acumen in what has happened. What did they do? First of all, they asked Mr Slater, the economist, to go out and help them solve this insurance crisis. Mr Slater went out, and he said: "You can go to no-fault. This is what you should do." Then they said, "No, we don't want to rely on Mr Slater to tell us what to do." All this while, what is happening? Rates were going up 12 per cent, 14 per cent, 18 per cent, 24 per cent, 30 per cent, 35 per cent, 40 per cent in the period during which Dr Slater was looking at this stuff.

Then the government said: "No, it's not good enough just to have an economist. We ought to get a judge," and a judge from Kitchener. I am sure the member for Kitchener (Mr D. R. Cooke), who is a lawyer practising in Kitchener, knows Judge Osborne well. He has had vast experience in the field of motor vehicle negligence.

Hon Mr Conway: I know a New Democratic commissioner from Kitchener who went to the municipal board. We should have got Morley Rosenberg.

Mr B. Rae: I hear the government House leader touting the case for Mr Rosenberg. I am sure he could have done a fine job.

I say that Osborne was then appointed, and he looked at the whole range of things. He did a comprehensive study. He commissioned all kinds of information. He had information coming out of his ears, two thick volumes. I can say this government has not acted on one of his recommendations, not a single one, not even on the recommendation that insurance forms should be made comprehensible and understandable to the ordinary person. They have not even moved on that.

Instead of which, we went through the election campaign. The government said: "We've got a better idea: We're going to lower rates." We went through that period where they said they

were going to lower rates. They had a very specific plan to lower insurance rates.

Then we had the debate on the insurance board in this House after 1987, when the Liberals had their mammoth majority. I would invite any of them, I would invite the government House leader, who I know is a reader, likes to read, and enjoys it—the print can be made large for him if it is necessary; he does not have to move his lips—If he takes time out from reading a Victorian biography on some corrupt Tory politician of 100 years ago in the United Kingdom, he can have a hard look at the speeches that were given by members of my own party, if I may say so; by the former member for Welland-Thorold, who led the fight for public insurance here for so many years; and by many colleagues of his. He will be able to contrast the predictions from this little ignorant band of people on this side who know nothing about the way the world works, and those worldly, wise geniuses with their business acumen, earned from years of long, hard experience, working in the field of free enterprise, as they all have been, and their acute understanding of the way in which the world really works.

That is the Liberal Party over there, and it is the business genius of the Liberal Party who gave us this insurance board and appointed Super Saviour, the man who appeared in the Toronto Star with a Superman shirt on: John Kruger. He solved the pension problem, did he not? He did. He gave the companies just about everything they wanted and said: "Look, you don't have to worry about taking the money out. Don't be so crude. You don't have to worry about taking the money out. Just don't put the money in. If you don't put the money in and go on holiday, nobody'll know because we don't keep a record of the companies that don't put the money in. We only keep a record of the companies that take the money out."

So John, with a rare genius, solved that pension problem, then turned around and said: "Premier, please, let me help you out of this insurance crisis. I can solve this insurance crisis for you." So we spend \$7 million on studies which give us what the Premier called a very good database.

I may be a mere ignorant socialist on this side of the House. We may know nothing about the way the world works, but when a government spends \$7 million on a database, something is fishy. You could spend a little bit less than that, give it to a good graduate student or an economist and say to the insurance companies, simply by

matter of law: "Tell us what you've got. Tell us what you're doing, and make that information available." You could do it for a lot less than \$7 million.

Do not tell me that this has all been planned, because if it has been planned, the people of Ontario have truly—I mean, this makes the five-year plans in the Soviet Union look like something the people really see coming. This makes the agricultural mess in the Soviet Union look like a model of capitalist efficiency. These guys say that they really want to carry this thing through in the most efficient and fair way.

I want to say this by way of conclusion: there is something called accountability, as I would understand it—I am told about it in the private sector—people who have to meet a bottom line. What if any company that any of the members of the Liberal party opposite work with carried on with such a degree of incompetence and then proceeded to accuse everybody who disagreed with them of being stupid and ignorant and malicious and deliberately misleading people?

That is what the minister said about us, and then turned around and said, "We are here to protect the consumer." He has never even had the grace to admit that he was wrong, never the grace to admit once that he had made a mistake, never the grace to admit that this time they blew it, they blew it badly and should pay the price. The minister should be accountable and the Premier should be accountable. They are responsible for the mess and should pay the price with their jobs.

Mr Cousens: This emergency debate on the automobile insurance industry is something that is reaching a crisis, as you can see, not only in the Legislature between the opposition and the party in power, but also with the many people in Ontario who really want to know where they stand and how their problems are going to be resolved with regard to their auto insurance. It is a crisis. It is a crisis that became far worse once the government became involved in this process.

We all know the history, but I would like to just touch on some of the components of the history that have led us to this moment, the fact that in 1986 and 1987 automobile insurance premiums in Ontario rose by approximately 40 per cent. Then on 23 April 1987 the Liberal government, under the Premier, froze automobile insurance rates and announced a plan to establish the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board.

So there were a number of moments, then, that began to unfold as the ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations became far more involved

in the setting of rates. A lot of what we are facing today is crystallized by a statement made by the Premier on 7 September 1987. He was campaigning in Cambridge and announced a plan to combat skyrocketing auto insurance rates. I would like to quote the exact words the Premier spoke on that day, just prior to the provincial election of 10 September, when he won a majority of 95 seats in this Legislature.

He said: "We have a very specific plan to lower insurance rates." Did everyone hear that? That is what the Premier said before all of this began to unfold. If he had a very specific plan, we have yet to find out what it is because no one knows, because what we have seen is a kind of waffling and movement and changing of mind, of making decisions and then rescinding decisions.

What I would like to point to are some of the statements that have been made by this government, by the Minister of Financial Institutions and by the Premier and others that really cause politicians to have a bad name. Is it any wonder that people do not trust politicians? When you come along and you get the Premier making that kind of statement and then not backing it up with actions or deeds or follow-through, that begins to test the credibility of people. It certainly has tested the credibility of those of us on this side of the House, except for the rump.

1640

I think you just have to look at some of the statements that have been made along the way. On 5 December 1988, when the Minister of Financial Institutions was saying that he was going to be somewhat removed from this whole process, here is what he had to say:

"I am quite prepared to leave the hearing and the determination of the rates with the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. They have proven in the past, with respect to their previous hearings, that they do a very thorough and reasonable job of analysing the material that is available to them and in fact make recommendations where there is a deficiency of same upon which to make good and valid recommendations."

The beginning of that statement by the minister says a great deal, "I am quite prepared to leave the hearing," as if they were going to be somewhat removed from his involvement.

On the same day, 5 December 1988, not that long ago, the minister said as well that the honourable gentleman will know that the mandate of the board is to establish fair and equitable rates with respect to insurance.

He was talking about Mr Fixit's program—Mr Kruger, that is—who was in there to set the rates and to solve the problem. That was all part of the statement by the Premier that he had made way back on that 7 September that he had a very specific plan to lower insurance rates.

On 7 December 1988, just a few days later, the Premier said:

"A bill passed through this House. It"—that is, auto insurance—"is in independent hands, and I think my honourable friend knows our approach to that....It is an independent board that will get independent advice from the member and from whomever else it chooses....The whole object of having the board is to build an independent database."

They have a plan and then they do not have a plan. They have a policy and then they do not have a policy. In fact, what you are really seeing here is a situation where the government has built expectations in the people of Ontario that it was going to do something about automobile insurance; that it was going to do something to protect their best interest; and the fact of the matter is it has failed totally to do that.

What they did was set a whole series of things in motion through the establishment of this board, and then everybody was led to believe that they would be allowed to come forward with their recommendations, and then our good friend the Minister of Financial Institutions has to backpedal on it.

The same minister said: "The government is committed to moderating the cost of insurance premiums, increasing efficiencies within the insurance industry and providing for fairer treatment for all drivers in Ontario."

That has not happened; that is not happening; and that is why today we are in the midst of this emergency debate, first thing when the House is convened, to deal with an issue in which the credibility of the government is in question.

I just wish that more people would sit back and pay attention to some of the things that the member for Leeds-Grenville has been saying, because he forecast some time ago the kinds of problems we are facing today. He has been articulate, he has been to the point, and he has been telling the government for a long time that it has failed to understand just what is involved in getting involved in setting these rates and structures.

What I would like to do is quote from the man who represents the people of this province and the man who is continuing to work on behalf of our party and all those people who are out there

looking for someone to be a defender of what is right and good. Let me quote from the member for Leeds-Grenville. He said:

"The Liberal government has behaved in a bizarre and inconsistent manner. First the Premier promises a very specific plan to lower auto insurance rates, then the government appoints a board which proposes a plan that would increase rates, and then the minister overrules the board and recommends a plan that will also increase rates. The consumers and insurance companies in Ontario are sick and tired of the government's shell games on auto insurance."

Who are the losers? I say every one of us is a loser, because in fact what they have done, through the Premier's statements and by the actions of the government, is to build up the expectations that the government was going to do something about it. What has in fact happened is that they have invested piles of money, piles of time and they have built up expectations among people who think that the government was actually going to do something to solve the problems around auto insurance. What they are having to do now is to come out with a last-ditch, last-minute program that is leaving everyone wondering just what is going on.

What does all this mean? First of all, it means that the government's actions in themselves have completely undermined its own creation, the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. Everything he has done, as minister—changing things arbitrarily, setting up a whole procedure and then backtracking on it—really shows a lack of confidence in what he said and in us it creates a lack of confidence in his ability to say what he really means. Who knows? It is no wonder people do not trust politicians when those guys keep on giving all the innuendo. They say one thing and they do the opposite.

I would have to say that after endless time, after the kind of money and the protests that have been made about what the government is trying to do, I think very few of us recall that, in fact, in December 1988, the auto insurance board received over 2,700 phone calls, they received 386 letters and 22 petitions with 65,000 signatures on them, saying that this government was wrong and the way they were handling it was wrong—just blazing ahead, as if they are not even going to listen to it.

Now, we are concerned; so is the industry. They were flabbergasted when this government came along and reversed decisions, getting involved as they are. Most of all, the consumers are concerned, because they are the ones who

listened to the Premier on 7 September 1987, just before he won his big mandate, when he went and said he was going to do something about it. Those very consumers are the people of Ontario who need to remember that the honourable Premier of our province is the one who came out and said he had a specific plan. He does not have a plan today. He did not have a plan then. Why is it that he is allowed to get away with that kind of statement?

That, in itself, is the kind of thing that creates an emergency with everybody. Here is a government having a chance to govern and do something; what they have done is mess up the system. We are upset and we are going to keep on fighting for the people who need to have someone who is going to defend them.

Mr Offer: I am pleased to rise in this debate today, because it gives us, on the government side, an opportunity to discuss how this government is dealing with this issue of such great concern to so many people in this province. Let it not be misunderstood. I direct my comments specifically to the members of the opposition that this Minister of Financial Institutions has demonstrated a singlemindedness of purpose, a purpose which is driven by what is in the best interests of the people of this province, of the consumers of this province.

The actions done by this government, and specifically by that minister, can only be shown to demonstrate an unfailing regard for the drivers of the province and what is the best course of action to take. We have, through this government's initiatives, learned much about the insurance industry. We learned much about the whole question of the setting of rates and the impact of rates. That is important information to know, to understand and to appreciate, because without being able to know and appreciate that information, we are not going to be able to take appropriate steps in dealing with the whole question of product reform.

The members of the opposition party would think: "We do not have to know that type of information. Let us just run off in all directions and let us hope that something works." That is not the action of a responsible government, that is not the action of this government, and it is not the action epitomized by the Minister of Financial Institutions, because the Minister of Financial Institutions has taken the course of action which states: "We are moving forward. We are moving forward with an understanding, with an appreciation of the factors that make up a very complex industry and that will serve the best

interests of the consumers of this province, drivers, seniors, all persons of this province.”

We have heard some great concern about this cap that was imposed, why and how such a cap could be imposed. Let me say, as the member for Mississauga North, that the reaction from those in my riding has been only positive. They see this as a responsible action, while the government is, with knowledge and with understanding, undergoing an analysis in a public consultative manner of product reform. They see this as something which is absolutely necessary to bridge the transition from this point to whenever that final decision is made on product reform. They are appreciative; they understand.

1650

If only the members of the opposition parties could understand, as do the constituents not only in my riding but, I trust, in many other ridings across this province, about the actions of this government, the actions of going forward with understanding, knowledge and appreciation of what makes up the insurance industry and what impact an improper type of decision could have on those consumers. They understand where we are going and they support the direction in which this Minister of Financial Institutions is leading.

It is not only the actions of the Minister of Financial Institutions that symbolize this type of action by the government. In dealing with this issue of insurance, there is the important aspect of the whole question of the tort or civil claims system of this province.

The Attorney General (Mr Scott), in a statement made to this House on 9 February 1989, indicated, “The tort system can be fine-tuned and therefore made better, fairer and more efficient in its treatment of those who have suffered injuries.” He then went on to say that he was undertaking tort reform in five specific areas: (1) the entitlement of prejudgement interest on damage awards; (2) the use of structured settlements; (3) the efficiency of the litigation process; (4) the use of advance payments by insurers, and (5) with respect to the further development of alternative dispute resolution for no-fault accident benefits.

What this does is show that the government is moving on different fronts, a number of fronts, not only through the leadership of the Minister of Financial Institutions and the Premier but also through the leadership of the Attorney General, in making an in-depth investigation as to how our tort system can be reformed to make it fairer and more efficient, which will be of direct benefit,

again, to the people and the consumers of this province.

There is a great opportunity for us on the government side in these types of debates to put forward what is in fact happening. We have heard some of those things from the members of the government side today. I think what we are seeing is that not only are we moving in terms of product reform, and in terms of consumer protection until we get to that product reform, but also we are talking about the whole question of tort reform and how that will be of benefit not only to the drivers but to so many other persons in this province.

I would like at this point to congratulate the Minister of Financial Institutions for the leadership he has shown in this area. It is a difficult area, a complex area, an area where there are many people who have many concerns and opinions. Throughout that, the Minister of Financial Institutions has shown that his overriding concern is what is in the best interests of the driving public and the consumers of this province.

Let me tell the House, we in this province are well served by the minister in this regard for the people of this province. We are well served by the Premier in providing the initial leadership that follows through with the Minister of Financial Institutions, and also the tort reform initiatives that have already been announced by the Attorney General.

With those many initiatives being undertaken by this government, the consumers, the drivers, the people of this province know, understand and realize that we are moving forward with an understanding and a responsibility, and that in the end result it is their interests which will best be protected and safeguarded.

Mr Hampton: It is with some degree of joy that I enter into this debate. I must say it is with some degree of joy that I am able to speak after the member for Mississauga North. I have had the privilege of working on committees with him, I have had the privilege of entering into debates in this House with him and I want to say to him that I have seen him do some wondrous things with the English language, but I have never seen him reach so far as he has today to try to make something that is absolute balderdash and absolute nonsense seem like something that is sensible. I want to say that to him just to set the ground rules straight before we get into this.

Mr Philip: I've seen his torts and I've seen your torts, and I prefer your torts any day of the week, Howie.

Mr Hampton: I want to thank the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale (Mr Philip) because he, having been in this House for a long time, knows how long this debate has gone on and knows how wrong the government is in everything it has done in terms of the auto insurance problems of this province.

I want to say as well that I am happy to enter into this debate today because I was one of those members of the Legislature who sat on the standing committee on administration of justice when it considered the bill which brought into law the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. I sat through the whole process. I was on the committee when we travelled to places like Windsor, Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Ottawa and Hamilton and we heard from all kinds of individual citizens about the magnitude and scope of the problems in the auto insurance industry in Ontario. They repeated it for us chapter and verse.

I was there to listen to the government member for York Mills (Mr J. B. Nixon), who was then the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions, and he was there with us every day, and I heard him say at length and repeat at length that what the government had in mind was a rational plan. This automobile insurance board was a rational plan that would stabilize the auto insurance situation in the province. It would deal with situations like the arbitrary cancellation of insurance policies. It would reduce premiums and it would stabilize the auto insurance problems in the province now and for some time to come. That is what they repeated in basically every community we visited. That is what the government repeated when we looked at the bill clause by clause.

We said at the time very directly to the government and in the committee that what the government had in mind was going to be a very costly and bureaucratic undertaking, if anything. We suggested to the government that the government sit down and look at how some of these so-called rate-setting boards have worked in the United States in various industries, because the history of them is clear: It does not take long before they become the captives of the enterprises they are supposed to be regulating and it does not take very long before consumer interests are lost and shuffled along in the bureaucratic melees.

The government said: "Oh no, this will be a rational system. This will govern the insurance industry in Ontario and regulate the insurance industry in Ontario, which will be to the utmost

benefit of consumers and to the utmost benefit of the providers of auto insurance both at the same time. It will take all of the irregularity out of it." We heard that ad nauseam when we were in the committee, and we heard it ad nauseam from the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) of the province, who was at that time, when this bill was debated in the House, the Minister of Financial Institutions.

I want to repeat what the leader of the official opposition said earlier here today. Whenever we brought up with this government the fact that this was not a plan, that it was not well thought out, that it was not the answer to what has become a chronic problem in Ontario in terms of the auto insurance industry, we heard from them: "No, no. You're wrong. You're mistaken. You don't know. You don't understand. You're trying to excite the public over something that's going to work. You're trying to mislead the public." We heard that time and time again from the government.

1700

We tried to point out to the government, when the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board held its first hearings, that what was evolving was not a very rational system. When the consultant called before the board to give expert information turns out to be a consulting group owned by one of the world's largest insurance companies, right away you have to say, "What's going on here?"

When they turned around and said, "If you want to do the right thing for insurance in Ontario, if you want to stabilize the market and solve the problems, you should offer an increase of between 35 per cent and 41 per cent, a one-shot increase; that's the way to do it," we raised questions again. The government said: "Oh, don't worry. This is a rational system. This is going to work. The board is going to sort through all of this."

Then we heard more submissions. The board finally came out with nothing at all that was going to lower insurance premiums, as the Premier said during the election campaign, nothing which was going to give predictability, nothing which was going to give stability. In fact, in its initial decision, the board set what are called benchmark rates of 7.6 per cent but then said that rates may vary up to 17 per cent. What was predictable about that?

Then when we looked at the situation of senior citizens and saw that their rates would be going up by anywhere from 20 per cent to 40 per cent, there was certainly nothing predictable or logical about that. Yet the government said: "You're trying to alarm the public. You're trying to

mislead the public. You're wrong. You don't understand."

Now, in a panic, without even legislation enabling them to do so, the Minister of Financial Institutions announces suddenly that the whole thing is off. This rational plan that had been considered for so long, that the government had explained ad nauseam in committee, ad nauseam in this House, ad nauseam to the public, this whole rational plan is scrapped and out the window.

But the legislative equipment to do that is not even in place. It is not even there. How can that have been a rational plan at any time? How can all of this be some evolution towards an intelligent, thought-out position? This is not a rational plan. This is not an evolving, conscious mind, knowing where it is going and what it is doing. This is flying by the seat of their pants, and the minister knows it.

I just want to reassure the minister that we know what changed his mind. We know. We have constituency offices. We are in touch with the public. I had senior citizens coming into my constituency office having received their letter from insurance companies saying: "We anticipate that your premium for the year, should you wish to renew, will be 30 to 40 per cent more than it was."

I had other people coming into my constituency office with a questionnaire from their insurance company asking them every question from "How old are you?" to "How far do you drive? When do you drive? Where do you drive?"—almost, "Where do you go to the bathroom?" It was the most incredibly detailed questionnaire, and people were unmistakably upset by it. What could be happening in the insurance industry that all of a sudden they want to know all this information?

Then this so-called 7.6 per cent benchmark was exposed for what it really was, a fraud, because every insurance company in the province was serving notice on consumers: "No, it's not 7.6 per cent. It's going to be a 17 per cent increase we want in your insurance premium." People knew that was not a plan to decrease insurance prices and it was not a plan to stabilize. That all became very evident. So the minister cannot tell us that this is some rational plan.

Finally, I just want to make a few remarks about the so-called tort reform, because what the government plans to do is to allow the insurance system to have the laws of the province changed to suit the insurance companies. Is this not wonderful? Imagine who is going to be next. The

finance companies? The life insurance companies? Who else is going to appear in this House and ask this Legislature to rewrite the laws of the province to suit them and only them? That is an irrational plan. It is an empty one.

Mr Cureatz: After that thrilling discussion by my learned colleague to my right, I am moved to participate in this debate. It gives me nothing but great pleasure once again, on the second day of this session, to let my feelings soar high so that those who are running the show over there, and sometimes I wonder if they know who is running the show, can be reminded about the fiasco we have encountered over automobile insurance.

Now, for the moms and dads at home, welcome back to Queen's Park. To refresh their memory, we are debating this afternoon a motion for an emergency debate brought forward by the official opposition—because we are the third party now—regarding, interestingly enough, as it is stated here, "the crisis in auto insurance for Ontario drivers." I do not know. For emergency debates, if we look in Webster's dictionary, another word might have been substituted for "crisis." Be that as it may, it is a concern about what is taking place, I say to the Minister of Natural Resources. I will tell members if the Minister of Natural Resources had control of this issue, it would not be an issue; it would be resolved.

But what has happened? The nasty front four have been trying to manipulate automobile insurance premiums in Ontario. They wandered into this mess back from the election of 1987, about which I am going to give all the members some chronological information. I know how excited they are about that. They have dug themselves so deep into this that now they are trying to dig themselves out. They are going to need not a shovel, but a great big backhoe, because they are in trouble.

It is interesting. I had the opportunity of substituting on, among other committees, the standing committee on public accounts. This was about a week and a half ago. I can give members the date when I look at my chronological order. I was walking down the main hallway, rushing to good old public accounts, and I encountered the minister himself with one or two of his staff. He was shuffling along the main hallway towards the east door, head down. It was not like the old minister I know. He is usually smiling and energetic, as he should be, living in that wonderful part of Ontario with Wiarton and the Bruce Peninsula up there, but not that day.

I got back to public accounts. Let me see, I think it was the House leader for the New Democratic Party who was gleaming with excitement. He said, "Do you know what the Minister of Financial Institutions just did now?" I said, "No, what did he do?" He said: "He just announced the stoppage of the whole insurance board and he has put a cap on the premiums. Isn't that exciting?" I could not get that excited about it particularly, but I knew the political ramifications of it because the Minister of Financial Institutions had been given his marching orders.

The mess they had got themselves into on this automobile insurance had finally come crashing down about his ears and he was told by the front four what to do—and I know he did not like doing it. In the days of ancient Rome, the messenger was usually killed. He looked in pretty bad shape that particular late morning after that press conference, because he did not want to do what he did, and that was to pull the rug from underneath that insurance board.

Mr Kruger, whom I think I have seen the odd time walking along Wellesley Street, was going to be the guru, the czar of this insurance board. He was going to bring forward from Mount Bay Street, or wherever his particular office is, the new method of setting premiums for Ontario. After \$7 million, what do we get? We get some good old-fashioned political interference.

It is interesting that on that public accounts committee, the first thing someone piped up with was the member for Durham-York (Mr Ballinger) who said, "I am so happy too, because we have limited the increase."

1710

I say to the member for Durham West (Mrs Stoner) that she has her own problems, as she and I well know, because the dump now looks like it is going into north Pickering. That is typical of this government. It does not know what it is doing with some of the major issues in Ontario, be it waste disposal—they were sending fear through my riding of Durham East on the possibility of putting the Metropolitan Toronto dump in my riding.

Happily enough, I am a third-party member and I could raise all kinds of Cain and bring in garbage bags and seagulls, but what is the member for Durham West going to do, who is so supportive of the government? She has to face Pickering-Ajax Citizens Together and all that group out there. I sent her a little note this afternoon.

I would love to have a little talk with her. I would give her some direction on how to handle

the front bench and on what she is going to do to save her riding, because she is going to be either made or broken over this issue.

Hon Mr Wrye: She is doing just fine.

Mr Cureatz: Oh, yes. Let's put the dump in his riding, I say to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. He would not let that happen. He would be screaming in cabinet. I know; I have been there: You sit around the table and you say: "No, not me. Let's look to a backbencher. Let's put it in her riding." That is what happened to the good old member for Durham West.

How about Sunday shopping? Does the government want to talk about that issue and how it passed that buck over? How about the health care issue that is taking place? What about the Workers' Compensation Board? Holy smokes. I sat on that committee. The members should see the protest over at the University of Toronto, Convocation Hall.

Where were all the backbenchers? They were not there taking the flak. There were about six poor Liberals and they were getting beat up time after time. The member for Mississauga whatever it is was over there. I felt embarrassed for them. I really did. I do not know how they could take it. I thought, doggone it, they should have the Premier or the Attorney General or the government House leader (Mr Conway) or the Treasurer taking that guff, or even, for that matter, the Minister of Labour (Mr Sorbara), who brought forward the legislation.

Now we have another mess, this insurance mess. Gee, I hardly have enough time. I cannot believe it. Let me review some of the statements the honourable minister made about the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. I like these. These are really good. I really do.

This gives me as much joy as it did when I was reading back all the now government House leader's statements, when he was House leader for the opposition, about closure motions and how it is disruptive to the parliamentary system and how slighted he was, and there he is, now in government, doing the same thing.

This gives me almost as much pleasure, because what did the Minister of Financial Institutions say? Do the members know what he said? "I am quite prepared to leave the hearing and the determination of the rates with the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board." That is what he said, back in December 1988. On 7 December 1988, from none other than the guru of gurus of the Liberal Party, "A bill passed through

this House. It"—the auto insurance—"is in independent hands."

I know why the minister was shuffling around, leaving the press conference towards the east door, head down, sad and forlorn. It was because he had to interfere with the insurance board after he came up with these pronouncements that it is independent, "We are not going to interfere."

Do the members know what the minister said on 13 December? "The board has been set up on the basis that it be at arm's length and independent of us." And him a lawyer. You would think he would know better: "Independent." Then he comes back in April and he tells the board what the cap is going to be. Is he not a little embarrassed, a teensy-weensy bit ashamed? How does he get in the limousine and live with himself after telling the board what to do?

On 10 January: "But right now," says the Minister of Financial Institutions, "I am not going to go out and issue a directive"—this is great—"that says that rates, despite whatever the member has heard, are going to be X." Let's read that again. That is beautiful. "Right now, I am not going to go out and issue a directive that says the rates, despite whatever the member has heard, are going to be X."

"What," I know the Speaker would like to say to himself, "does that mean?" That means—shall I say the word?—a little hypocritical; not big hypocritical because I would not want to be unparliamentary. You will get out Erskine May, the book with 15,000 pages, and look under the section to see if that word is not proper for these chambers. So I will just say a little hypocritical, because he said back on 10 January that he was not going to interfere in what happens.

Mr Speaker, no, he did not drop his seating plan; he interfered. He went contrary to what he has been saying all along since the passage of this bill.

The saga continues, I say to the folks back home with the remaining eight seconds left. I am sure they will be hearing more from all of us, the humble numbers that we are, about the fiasco that is taking place in the insurance industry because of this large arrogant government.

The Speaker: Order. The member might like to sit down and wind down.

Ms Poole: We always find the member for Durham East (Mr Cureatz) to be quite entertaining. However, we are not here today to be entertained. We are here to talk about a very serious topic that is very important to the people of Ontario: auto insurance.

I would like to speak a bit about the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. When the member for Bruce (Mr Elston) made his announcement regarding auto insurance on 17 April, he made a point of emphasizing that the government's action in no way was a criticism of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. Indeed, the minister had nothing but praise for the board.

This government has every confidence in the auto insurance board, and I would like to take this opportunity to expand on the minister's words of praise. Without the tireless efforts of the board and the long hours its members have laboured, the government would not have known with the degree of certainty that it does today that, first, the cost of insurance claims is driving the cost of insurance premiums, and second, that our current tort system will only drive them higher in the coming years.

The government has benefited greatly from the activities of the board and its decision-making process. The board's decision regarding a benchmark rate was made within the context of its mandate under the statute establishing the board, which is to establish rates within the existing insurance delivery system.

The government, however, is responsible for making any decisions with respect to product reform. By capping the rates at 7.6 per cent until the introduction of product reform, the government has acted to ensure cost moderation now, with a view to achieving both fair rates and fair compensation in the future after a decision is taken with respect to product reform.

The opposition has questioned whether the auto insurance board's hearings have been a waste of time and money. The answer to that is obvious. No, they have not. The opposition should, and does, know better. Through the public hearing process, where everyone has been given an opportunity to be heard, the auto insurance board has identified the appropriate across-the-board increase: 7.6 per cent.

The board has also brought into the open exactly how auto insurance works. Before, to many of us, it was a very mystifying process. So it has been a very worthwhile education process for each and every one of us, including members of the insured driving public. As well, the board hearings currently in progress are giving the public an opportunity to participate in the process of product reform in the auto insurance industry in Ontario. These are all worthwhile outcomes of the board's hearings.

The government's immediate priority is to ensure that the board carries on with its scheduled

hearings on no-fault automobile insurance systems. The government will be looking carefully at the conclusions of the board arising out of these hearings when it is selecting the best no-fault system for Ontario.

There will, of course, be changes. For example, the current classification scheme will require re-examination in light of the insurance product we end up selecting. I am sure we will seek the board's advice in dealing with this. The issues of the appropriate process for the setting of rates for the new system will also have to be reviewed, and of course we will again rely on the board's assistance in this matter.

1720

The government continues to believe that an effective auto insurance system can be delivered without ratings based on age, sex, marital or family status or handicap. However, a new classification system should be put in place, along with the new insurance product, on a basis that ensures individuals do not experience any more dislocation than necessary. We believe consumers will be better served by one transition into a new insurance system, rather than making a large change in June and a further change again shortly after a decision is taken with respect to product reform.

In acting now, we have avoided the upheaval of putting the people of Ontario through two major changes in auto insurance in a very short period of time. We have asked the auto insurance board to give us its advice about the various options of no-fault insurance and have every confidence that its advice will assist us in choosing the system of auto insurance that will best serve the people of this province.

Ms Bryden: I am glad the New Democratic Party called an emergency debate on the chaos in the auto insurance market as the first order of business in this new Legislature. I am sorry the first bill introduced was not the bill to tell us what the government's solution is to the chaos that has been created by the excessive rate increases proposed by the new regulatory body.

I want to speak particularly about how seniors played a role in the change in government policy that resulted in the imposition of a 7.6 per cent cap on excessive increases in auto insurance rates, which had been recommended by the newly appointed rate regulation board. Seniors are to be congratulated for raising the hue and cry that forced the government to act. Many seniors already were paying close to \$800 a year in Metropolitan Toronto and would have been

asked for increases of up to 17 per cent a year or more beginning 1 June 1989.

At the 6 March hearing of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board, I presented a brief pointing out that the proposed rates hit seniors particularly hard because seniors' discounts were no longer allowed and their many years of claim-free driving were not recognized in any way. Seniors' organizations and many individuals attended the hearings in droves. They pointed out that over half of them lived below the poverty line and that their pensions would not increase by more than a few dollars this year. They cannot afford huge increases of the kind proposed by the regulatory board. Many would have had to give up their cars, a necessity for those living in areas without adequate transit.

Seniors said it was grossly unfair to bring in a new system that took no account of their low-risk record and contained no cap on rate increases or any special adjustments for low-income persons to cushion the impact of the proposed rate increases. I recommended measures to cushion the impact of the new rates, as did our NDP critic for insurance, the member for Welland-Thorold. We also recommended the appointment of a public advocate and a cap on the amount of increase in any one year for people on low incomes, people with disabilities and the thousands of men and women still awaiting action on pay equity, and therefore receiving lower incomes.

The board rejected the seniors' pleas and our recommendations. They did bring in a small low-risk category for which few seniors or other low-income people would qualify. It was also not mandatory, so it depended on the willingness of the companies to offer it.

Unfortunately, the legislation setting up the rate regulation board gives it absolute discretion to set the rates. One wonders, of course, where that discretion has gone with the recent actions of the government announcing a cap. Under the legislation, the government can only issue policy statements to guide the board, but so far it has not done that either.

The act does not say that affordability has to be one of the criteria considered by the board. So far, profitability and rate of return have been the main criteria. Instead of the proposed rate reduction that was promised in the election, we have a regulatory board that keeps rates at a level that will preserve the present inefficient system of selling automobile insurance across this province.

The government has not yet indicated what is going to replace the present inefficient and unreal board. The board has proved to be a paper tiger with regard to the insurance companies. The public hearing process is too cumbersome and it is weighted against insurance buyers. The hearings are often very lengthy, with mainly insurance company lawyers and advocates occupying a great deal of the time. The public has no public financing for its research or its expert witnesses or its lawyers. The hearing rooms are somewhat remote in the North York city hall complex.

Nothing is being done by the board to curb the powers of the insurance companies to decide arbitrarily who will get insurance and on what terms. This is why it was so essential that the work of the board be brought out, as has happened with the seniors and other adversely affected people raising a hue and cry. But they are not going to be satisfied with the continuation of this inefficient and inadequate regulatory board. They are going to demand, "What is the government going to put in its place?"

After all, the cap is only a desperate, temporary measure to save the government's face from offending and disadvantaging hundreds of thousands of people by the new rates. What will happen in 1990 when this cap term presumably runs out?

This is again where Grey Power may tell the government that it has to bring in an insurance system that will bring us cheaper insurance and more efficient delivery of selling automobile insurance in this province. To me, that adds up to a public, driver-owned insurance system.

A regulatory body that is a paper tiger is not only useless, but it is very expensive to this province. It has already presumably cost us \$11 million. We may have learned a few facts about the insurance industry, but the government has not learned the facts about the insurance industry. It is fragmented and inefficient and it is not the way to deliver the product most people want, and that is adequate insurance on fair rates that will reward the good drivers and will penalize very quickly the bad drivers, so that ultimately they may even get off the road.

That is what happens under the public auto insurance plans in this country. It is notable that they were introduced by NDP governments and have not ever been removed by succeeding governments.

I think this debate is very important to bring out why we need to reassess our whole approach to the delivery of auto insurance to the customers

of this province. It is important to let the seniors and others who were going to be seriously affected, particularly a large number of women and a large number of single parents and low-income people, know as soon as possible what is going to be the picture on insurance for the next year, not just for the next six months. I am sure they are really only breathing a temporary breath of relief for the moment. The board is still there and the board may still be mainly an advocate for the insurance companies with the government. That has been the picture in the past.

We have to get out of this Legislature, this session, some definite legislation that will tell us how we are going to get the cheaper insurance rates that the Premier promised to us and that the people of this province deserve. Insurance is compulsory under the law. We should be getting it in the most efficient way and not in the way that we have been observing in the chaotic 15 months since the insurance board was appointed.

1730

Mr Ferraro: As parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions, let me say initially how disappointed I am to hear some of the silly remarks by the opposition, specifically in regard to the fact that they say the minister should resign. I can tell you, Mr Speaker, that it has been my pleasure to be his parliamentary assistant. If any man has the best interests of this province and the consumers of this province at heart, it is indeed the Minister of Financial Institutions.

I find myself participating in this emergency debate and the first question I have to ask myself is: What is this emergency all about? The minister who, quite rightfully, saw some exorbitant fees coming down the pike on 1 June had the courage to take the action he did: cap rates, as we all know, at 7.6 per cent.

All of a sudden, the opposition, the New Democratic Party, says: "No. This isn't good enough. We have to have an emergency debate." You wonder why the socialist party, the opposition of Ontario, would want to have an emergency debate. The first thing that came to mind was: "They must be closet capitalists. They want insurance companies to get more than 7.6 per cent." Surely that cannot be the reason; surely it cannot.

The real emergency, I suggest, deals with the research staff. We took the next two months' questions dealing with automobile insurance right out of the mouths of the NDP. I can just see them standing up day after day saying, "Mr

Speaker, so-and-so in the village of such-and-such is being subjected to totally unreasonable insurance premiums"; that this is unacceptable and that we are an uncaring government and all the rest of it. I feel sorry for the research staff, because now they are going to have to search and find some new questions for the NDP to ask and they were not prepared for that.

Thank goodness we have a government in power that at least has the flexibility to deal with real emergencies. Can you imagine if the NDP, God forbid, were ever in power and had an emergency? They would immediately have to call a national convention, because any major policy decisions are decided there. God knows what would happen if indeed that were to transpire.

I was trying to think of an analogy of the action of the opposition calling for an emergency debate on this issue. I tried to think of something in history that would be analogous. The only thing I could think of is, we all know the story about the little guy who put his finger in the dike to hold back the flood. We all know that.

Mr Laughren: I never heard that. Tell us about it.

Mr Ferraro: I think he was about the size of the member for Nickel Belt (Mr Laughren).

Anyway, if that were to happen today, if the little guy put his finger in the dike to hold back the flood and if the NDP was there, surely it would have him whipped, because he did something that was good for the consumers and good for the citizens he represented. That, obviously, is the motive behind this emergency debate. It baffles the mind.

Why did the minister say we are going to cap insurance premiums? Why did he do that? It has been alluded to by a number of people already that while many people who require automobile insurance were going to have savings, a substantial portion of them, somewhere around a million of them, were going to experience as a result of the new classification system increases in excess of 30 per cent, some as high as 90 per cent. It is unacceptable, I am sure, to every member of this House; people, our constituents, could not bear that type of increase. I think we reacted the only way we could.

Politically, it was not acceptable to me—and I will speak for myself, although I am sure many other members in this House would have to agree that it is politically suicidal and unacceptable. Politics motivates a lot of the things, if not most of the things, that the members in this House do. It motivates the NDP to say it is against free

enterprise. Indeed, they purport to be the exponents of socialism, that indeed the government should control everything.

Politics motivated the members of the Conservative Party, in 1975, to come out with rent controls; indeed, to steal then from the NDP because it was politically advisable to do so.

I think it is quite rightly fair to say that politically, for me, it was unacceptable. The people in my riding, the great riding of Guelph, would not want me to sit still and allow exorbitant increases to come about, so we are not doing that, especially when the reality is, and the board is hearing it now, that a couple of months from now we are going to have for the people in Ontario at least two new forms of auto insurance, whether it is threshold no-fault or choice no-fault.

If the scenario had been allowed to progress according to the opposition, then what we would have had was a lot of people being extremely upset, dislocated financially and mentally, experiencing problems in getting insurance, and then two months from now, they would have the options of lower auto insurance and different types of auto insurance. Logically, it did not make sense, quite frankly. We felt that capping it until we have all the pieces of the puzzle in place made the most sense.

This is the second question that has to be addressed, and it has been attacked by the opposition: Is the board useless? Did we waste \$7 million? Absolutely not. They got many of the arguments they are using today from the hearings the auto insurance board presented to the public. Indeed, we have taken all these decisions out of the closet, out of the boardroom, and educated not only other insurance companies but also politicians and the consumers of this province. I think it is money well spent, to say the least.

I remind members that we had absolutely no central data point. We had no collection of information or database on which to judge auto insurance. Indeed, no province in Canada now has the same degree of information that we have at our disposal.

We did not know, and the auto board told us, that obviously the amount of premiums we pay is directly related to the amount that claims cost. We did not know that the claim cost was rising at twice the amount of inflation. We did not know that we needed the degree of tort reform that is directly related to the cost of claims and, obviously, directly related to the cost of premiums.

The board came out with 7.6 per cent as a benchmark, which of course is the amount the minister and this government will grant. The board will continue to be an invaluable asset in the future when it deals with the issues that it is presently dealing with, that is, the specific types of auto insurance, again whether it is threshold no-fault or choice no-fault.

It is interesting when I listen to the opposition members and they talk about their solutions. I was listening to the member for Welland-Thorold last week, and he said, "We propose a public, driver-owned nonprofit plan where there would be adequate, speedy wage replacement, adequate compensation for medical and rehabilitation expenses, but there would also be retained the right to sue."

Indeed, I could not help but listen when the Leader of the Opposition referred to himself as an ignorant socialist. We all know that is far from the truth. A socialist he is; ignorant he is not, nor is the member for Welland-Thorold. In their pronouncements and condemnations of this minister and this government, they did not mention the cost of the premiums for his proposal nor the increasing cost of claims, which is a reality this government has to deal with.

When the member for Welland-Thorold talked about the premium comparison of Vancouver to Scarborough, did he talk about the capital cost associated with implementing the public auto insurance? Did they talk about the millions and millions in lost interest that the taxpayers have lost as a result of that action? Did they talk about the constant injections of funds every time the public auto insurance fund goes broke, or is on the verge of it? Did they talk about the thousands of lost jobs as a result of their action? No, they did not. Obviously, it is selective memory recall.

1740

I want to say in conclusion that indeed again this government is showing the leadership—under trying circumstances, I admit—that is needed. The board will continue to provide invaluable information to everyone, including not only the consumers of this province but the politicians and the insurance companies as well. With product and tort reform, we will have lower premiums for auto insurance in this province and we will have a much better educated consumer.

Mr Philip: On 7 September 1987, the Premier said that if re-elected he would implement a plan to lower automobile insurance rates for Ontario drivers. There is no mention about automobile insurance in this throne speech, the one delivered just yesterday. Normally the throne speech is

used to let citizens know about the programs planned for the future, but also to take some credit for the accomplishments since the last throne speech.

Obviously the government must have been aware, when it wrote the throne speech that was delivered yesterday, of the outcries from the public, and in particular the senior citizens, their spokespersons and their organizations, about escalating insurance rates. It is fairly obvious that they realized that their plan to stop the escalating insurance was a failure or they would have talked about how successful those plans were in the throne speech yesterday.

Similarly, if they had had any concrete plans that would have worked, that would have delivered the Premier's election promise, which we all saw on TV in the numerous ads that helped to get him his majority, one would have expected that there would have been an announcement in the throne speech yesterday on the specifics of the plan that would lower automobile insurance in keeping with the Premier's promise of 7 September. But there is no such thing in that throne speech.

It is fairly obvious that the government has not been successful in keeping the Premier's promise and it is fairly obvious that the government knows that it will not be able to keep the Premier's promise. I refer the members, though, to the throne speech of 28 April 1987. It is interesting to contrast. That throne speech said, and I refer members to page 9 of Hansard:

"My government will protect Ontarians from unfair and arbitrary practices in the marketplace. In doing so, we will take steps to promote increased consumer awareness.

"We recently announced a comprehensive package of new auto insurance legislation. Among other provisions, the program will cap auto insurance premiums and establish a public review process under which insurance rates must be justified."

What has the government done? The government has undertaken three studies: Slater, Osborne and, lately, the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board, which it has transformed from a tribunal into a glorified study group. The cost of the auto insurance board has been some \$7 million. With all of his studies, this minister should apply for an Ontario student assistance program grant, because he has undertaken more studies than any graduate student I know—but at a cost of \$7 million?

It has been transformed from its original objective, which was that of studying the rates,

of protecting the consumers, to being an expensive study group. After spending all these millions of dollars, the government still does not know what it wants to do and motorists continue to have their insurance policies renewed at higher and higher rates and in some cases are being forced off the roads. I refer members to conversations I have had with some limousine drivers at the airport and indeed with some of the taxi drivers for Kipling Cab, which services a lot of the people in my area. These people are being forced off the road by the escalating auto insurance rates.

We still have arbitrary decisions by the insurance companies. A constituent came to me only today. I will be meeting with her tonight, because she is bringing in the documents. She has been charged with driving recklessly. The court date is set for November, but the insurance company is not awaiting the decision of that court to raise her rates. They have already cancelled her insurance. So the insurance company, in an arbitrary manner, thinks that its decisions are better than those of the court and has superimposed that she is guilty whether she is found guilty several months from now or not. That is the kind of arbitrariness we are facing and the government has done nothing to stop this kind of thing.

After spending all that tax money, the minister states he wants to study it further and that he will study the possibility of private, no-fault insurance. It is interesting that the only public bodies, the only lobby groups, that are asking for private, no-fault insurance are the insurance companies. Private, no-fault insurance is the equivalent of the Red Cross Society saying, "We're going to shelve our responsibility for managing the blood bank and give it to Dracula and his friends." It just does not make any sense whatsoever.

The reason the insurance companies have been clamouring for no-fault for years is because it restricts the ability of accident victims to sue in instances when they have not received an acceptable claim resulting from an accident.

In other words, the Liberals have now come up with a strange way of protecting the consumer. First, they have developed a system which allows very high escalating rates in premiums, and now they are proposing another system which will allow the consumer to be ripped off not just on premiums but also on claims when they have a serious accident. The consumer is really well protected. They are slammed at the beginning when they buy the insurance, and in the event, unfortunately, that they have a bad accident, they

are going to get shafted at that end as well. Some protection by the Liberals. Certainly it is protection for the insurance companies, but not for the consumer.

The government claimed it had a solution to escalating insurance rates. It introduced legislation in this House and said that legislation was the solution. We debated that legislation. Even at that time, the Liberals broke their election promise. They had promised a consumer advocate to appear before all tribunals where prices would be set or established. At the time it set up this legislation, it did not establish that consumer advocate and broke a promise even in introducing that legislation.

Now, today, we have an astonishing admission. What the minister is saying is: "Yes, I introduced an act a year ago. Yes, I said I had a solution, but the legislation is not good enough. The legislation is not good enough and therefore I'm going to have to bring in yet more legislation, because after setting up this tribunal I cannot live with the decisions of that tribunal, so I have to bring in legislation to overrule it."

Well, one has to ask: Why spend \$7 million to set up a tribunal if after spending all that money, they are going to make the decisions themselves anyway? Why does he need the tribunal if he is going to set the rates?

Any reasonable person would have to ask how one can have any confidence in a government that says: "I'm going to bring in legislation one year to solve a major problem," and then a year later says, "I'm going to bring in more legislation, but it's going to undercut the original legislation."

One has to ask: If the original legislation was adequate, why does the minister need another bill? Why does he have to bring in a tribunal and then bring in more legislation to say the rates will be set by the government anyway?

On 1 March 1989, the minister said: "It has been my position that I would not interfere in the hearing process." Similarly in January, just two months earlier, he said: "I will not interfere with the tribunal." He set up what was supposed to be an independent tribunal. Then when the heat comes on, when the consumer groups say, "We're being gouged. We cannot stand the kind of insurance rates we're getting," the minister, the cabinet, the Premier or whatever little group in the Office of the Premier that seems to dictate to all the Liberals what they have to do, be it on Sunday shopping or whatever other issue, brings the axe down and the minister is cut off at the knees and is told: "You can't do that. Sure, we

said we would set up an independent tribunal. Sure it cost the taxpayers \$7 million, but, my goodness, it's not working out the way we wanted and we're losing votes on this so we'd better do something different. So now we're going to have another piece of legislation. The first piece hasn't worked. The second piece we're going to introduce as a way of stalling, and somewhere in the future we're going to have a solution."

Well, some promise. Some way of running a government.

What is even more frightening is that the Minister of Financial Institutions is also the Chairman of Management Board. The Chairman of Management Board is supposed to be the minister who sees that the public purse is protected from mismanagement. If that is the minister who is protecting us from waste and mismanagement, after squandering \$7 million, after wasting the time of the House on a piece of legislation that he is now undercutting, one has to ask: "What kind of manager is he as the Chairman of Management Board? How many other millions of dollars are being wasted as a result of the ineptitude of this minister and this government?"

1750

Mr Mackenzie: Just very briefly, I could not resist it; I would hope my colleagues on the government side of the House would do the right thing for once.

It is obvious that they could not live up to their promise to lower insurance rates in Ontario, a promise that almost everybody who was following the election saw or watched and has certainly heard repeated a number of times. The tribunal has not worked, the auto insurance board setup has not worked. They have obviously seen that the rates were going to be so high that numbers of people would have been down their throats over the increases they were seeing in their auto insurance rates, and their friends in the insurance industry are not happy. They tell us that they are not making money, that you cannot make money in auto insurance today, that the costs are too high, and indeed some of them are even getting out of business themselves.

Why not put them out of their misery and score a whole pile of Brownie points and do away with all of the problems they have by bringing in a public auto insurance plan right off the bat? They would resolve all of these problems and even gain some credibility again, which they have totally lost.

I would suggest that they move that way and make their auto insurance friends happy, who do not think they can make any money in the business, make the people happy with a plan where they can see what it is going to cost and the yearly charges when they renew their licences, and get out of the trouble they are in with their own incompetence in terms of auto insurance.

Mr Reycraft: Now we'll hear the voice of reason.

The Speaker: Order. Are there any other members wishing to participate?

Mr Laughren: I was not originally intending to take part in the debate this afternoon, but it really is remarkable to see how the Liberals have tried every conceivable means of avoiding the real issue here; and that is whether Ontario should have private auto insurance or public auto insurance. There is virtually no amount of money that they will not spend in order to avoid dealing with that central question.

I do not think that this government needs to be told, but I am going to tell it anyway, just to make myself feel better. In the three provinces out west where NDP governments brought in public auto insurance and subsequently governments changed—I do not understand that, but anyway they are no longer NDP governments out there—the new governments, Social Credit or Conservative, have not changed the public auto insurance programs in those provinces. They still have public auto insurance there, even though in Saskatchewan and in British Columbia in particular, for example, you have people in charge of that government who can hardly be called sympathetic to the cause of the public sector and who in fact would like very much to divest themselves of the public auto insurance programs if they thought they could get away with it. But they have not done that. They simply have not done that.

Why? Because they know that they have got the most efficient system possible in place in those provinces.

Mr Campbell: With subsidies?

Mr Laughren: No, not with subsidies—no subsidies; that is the point. They know that if they were to do away with the very efficient public plans in the western provinces, there would be such an uproar among the population that they would be turfed out of office in the next election, and I would predict that it is a matter of time until this government, despite the fact that its Premier resides in and represents the city of London, Ontario, the heartland of the Canadian insurance

industry, at some point this government is going to have to come to grips with that problem. It is going to have to say: "Look, we have tried everything else, we have set up the insurance board, we have tried to give it the autonomy to take the heat off ourselves; it did not work. We spent \$7 million on the process and then flushed the whole process down the sewer with the most recent announcement."

Hon Mr Elston: No, no, no; that is wrong.

Mr Laughren: Well, that is exactly what the government did. Tell me what came out of that \$7 million. What came of it? To what good use has that expenditure been put? How has it been used? How has it contributed to the cause? All it did was tell the Liberals that the system is not working. It must be a terrible embarrassment to have opposition members—

I am not going to say it, because other members have said it and I do not need to repeat what the Premier said about how he was going to lower insurance rates in the province of Ontario. Since then, of course, insurance rates have only gone in one direction and that is up; sure as hell not down. It must be a terrible embarrassment for the Liberals to be reminded of that all the time. I do not need to remind them, because other members have done it often enough.

I do not know how the Liberals look at each other in the caucus room every week when they think about that and when there is a discussion in their caucus room about auto insurance. It must really bother those members, particularly those who are in danger of being what we affectionately call one-trippers around this place.

Mr Mackenzie: Rollers; roll right in and roll right out.

Mr Laughren: Rollers; roll in and roll out. It is going to be mighty tough in the next provincial election. If those people who are in danger of being one-trippers—I am not talking about Sterling Campbell, the member for Sudbury, but I am talking about those other members who are in danger of being one-trippers. I do not think Sterling is going to last the session.

If the Minister of Financial Institutions was really serious about two things, he could kill two birds with one stone, so to speak. He could insist that—and I will just use this name once, Mr Speaker, and then I will go back to referring to members by their proper names; I hope you will allow me that latitude once more only.

If the Minister of Financial Institutions was really serious about it, he would resolve a lot of his problems by insisting that Sterling Campbell be appointed as his parliamentary assistant. That way, it would make it much easier for the member for Sudbury to campaign on the fact that he was close to the heart of government and close to the important decision-makers on the front benches in this government. Right now, it is not fair. The people in Sudbury have been complaining to me that they think one of the reasons that auto insurance rates are in such a shambles is that the member for Sudbury is not the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions, the minister who is responsible for auto insurance.

It is really not up to me to make appointments on behalf of the Premier, but I think that unless something is done to help out the Minister of Financial Institutions, there will be absolutely no confidence left in this government to manage its affairs at all.

I do not want to put the entire obligation or responsibility or burden on the member for Sudbury; I think that would be inappropriate. But I do think his talents are not being appropriately utilized around this place. If the Premier wants to consult with me at any time as to where his talents lie, other than in what he is doing now, I would be very happy to help him out in that regard.

In conclusion, I do think the government has played fast and loose with the consumers of Ontario—the automobile drivers; it has played fast and loose with Mr Kruger of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board; and it has played fast and loose with all the people of Ontario by not keeping the promise the Premier made, which I am not going to refer to any more.

The House adjourned at 1800.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*

(130 seats)

First Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

- Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)
 Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)
 Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)
 Beer, Charles (York North L)
 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)
 Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)
Bradley, Hon. James J., Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)
 Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breaugh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)
 Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)
 Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)
Caplan, Hon. Elinor, Minister of Health (Orillia L)
 Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)
 Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
 Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)
 Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)
 Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)
Conway, Hon. Sean G., Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)
 Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)
 Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)
 Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)
Curling, Hon. Alvin, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)
 Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)
 Dietsch, Michael M. (St. Catharines-Brock L)
Eakins, Hon. John F., Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)
Edighoffer, Hon. Hugh A., Speaker (Perth L)
 Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)
Elston, Hon. Murray J., Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L)
 Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)
 Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)
 Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)
 Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)
 Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)
 Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)
 Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)
Fontaine, Hon. René, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)
Fulton, Hon. Ed, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)
Grandmaitre, Hon. Bernard C., Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)
 Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)
 Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)
 Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)
 Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)
 Hart, Christine E. (York East L)
 Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)
Hošek, Hon. Chaviva, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)
 Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)
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 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)
 Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)
 Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)
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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Second Session, 34th Parliament

Thursday, 27 April 1989

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, 27 April 1989

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

NATIVE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr Wildman: I rise to bring the attention of the House to the plight of the 6,000 native post-secondary education students in Ontario colleges and universities. Because of this large number of native students, colleges and universities in this province receive a significant portion of their funding; more, thank goodness, native kids are finishing high school and going on to higher levels of education. The federal government's proposal to limit native students' funding threatens the financial stability of many of Ontario's post-secondary school programs.

But even more than this, I reject the position taken by the federal Conservative government in arguing that the right to post-secondary education funding for native students is not a treaty right, but rather is more of a privilege. During the Constitution debates, the one thing that was agreed by the provinces and the federal government with regard to treaty rights was that treaty rights should be recognized.

If treaty rights are indeed recognized, they cannot now be reneged upon by the federal government. I think it is the height of hypocrisy for white society to say that it is prepared to fund post-secondary education for native students as long as not too many natives are going to post-secondary educational institutions. But when the numbers start to increase, we suddenly say it is costing too much and we have to put a cap on the funding.

UKRAINIAN EASTER

Mr Jackson: I take great pleasure in rising today to acknowledge the coming Easter celebration which will be observed by members of the churches of the Christian East on Sunday, 30 April.

As someone with deep roots in eastern-rite Christianity, and the Slavic tradition of the Ukrainian church in particular, I know that Easter is the most colourful and happiest time of the year for members of that branch of Christen-

dom. The rich symbol of the painted Ukrainian Easter egg, for example, dominates the home as a meaningful token of the resurrection of Christ.

The blessing of Easter baskets in church after the long Easter services and the ritual dances performed by children on lawns bespeak of the holiday joy which is shared by the entire community on Easter day. It is a joy that I personally look forward to as my Burlington parish of the Holy Protection prepares to greet yet another Easter season.

The beginning of that season is heralded by the greeting, "Christ is risen!" "Krestos Voskres!" to which one responds with "Truly has he risen!" "Voyeestinoos Voskres!" It is, in short, a day for families, for traditions and for memories.

At this most special time of the year, I would like to extend, on behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party, my best and most heartfelt wishes to all those who will, this weekend, relive the Easter experience with its powerful symbolism and optimistic vision and hope for all mankind.

MENTAL HEALTH

Mr Keyes: Next Monday, 1 May, I will have the honour of welcoming to the riding of Kingston and The Islands, Robert Graham, who chaired the Provincial Community Mental Health Committee which produced the report *Building Community Support for People: A Plan for Mental Health in Ontario*.

Mr Graham will be in Kingston to attend the annual general meeting of the Kingston branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association. This event coincides with the commencement of Mental Health Week across Ontario and Canada. The CMHA will be hosting events and displays all around Kingston, as will community organizations across the province, to draw attention to mental health and to elicit discussion about these issues.

In the Graham report, which will certainly be discussed on Monday in Kingston, Mr Graham himself recommends two broad goals and principles for mental health policy: a comprehensive and accessible system with an emphasis on community-based support for individuals and families who must cope with serious or pro-

longed mental illness, and integration of services provided by health professionals, community agencies, general hospitals and psychiatric hospitals.

I am pleased that the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) has embraced these recommendations in principle and that our government has moved towards meeting its August 1987 commitment of doubling funding in community health and addiction programs over three years. Annual expenditures are expected to reach \$174 million in 1990-91. Programs were allocated \$121 million in 1988-89. I congratulate the Kingston branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association on its efforts in Kingston in the last year, particularly the organization during Mental Health Week.

KINDERGARTEN

Mr R. F. Johnston: There were not many planks in the throne speech platform presented and today the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) is starting to rip up one of the major ones, the whole question of the extension of kindergarten. He is basically telling us somehow that child care money was going to be coming from the federal government, that he was going to be contingent on it to be able to somehow extend education, as I understand it, to children in kindergarten.

I actually have the quotes from what he said this morning. Then he has the gall to make us believe that he did not understand, number one, that the submarines and the new child care program were put together and that if one were to go the other would go. He also makes us believe that somehow this was quality education that was being initiated by the government. Yet what we now find out is that it was a cheap day care move, a way to get child care in at a 25-to-1 ratio rather than an eight-to-one ratio under our present child care system.

That is what this was all about. I just learned, in fact, that in the pre-throne-speech briefing that was given, the Deputy Minister of Education would not give assurances to teachers' federations that it would be teachers who would be teaching junior kindergarten.

What do we have here? We have a major bluff being pulled on this House and this province. The government is not funding kindergarten; it is funding day care. Now that the feds have not gone ahead with their program, as we knew they would not, the minister is saying he cannot even do it. What a hoax that whole thing has been.

1340

JOE PHILION

Mr McLean: My statement concerns a spunky 15-year-old who returned to a hero's welcome near Orillia on 17 April 1989 after spending 13 long months in hospitals recovering from burns to 95 per cent of his body.

Joe Phillion was rushed to the Shriners Burns Institute in Boston after fire destroyed his family's home in March 1988 and injured Joe so badly that doctors had not expected him to survive. But Joe proved them wrong, and a massive crowd of friends, relatives, neighbours, schoolchildren, members of the press, city and township officials and Shriners like myself were on hand to welcome him when he arrived at his new home of love in Cumberland Beach, which was built under the construction and direction of Ken McCann.

Mr McCann rallied countless individuals and companies to donate their time, expertise and materials for this labour of love. For conceiving the idea of building Joe a new home with volunteer help, Ken McCann was named as the city of Orillia Citizen of the Year for 1988. Because of the efforts of Ken McCann and his band of volunteers, a new house of love rose from the ashes of the Phillion home which was destroyed by fire more than a year ago.

On behalf of all of us here in this Legislature, I would like to welcome Joe Phillion home and to thank Ken McCann, his group of volunteers and the Shriners for all they have done. It is a job well done.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Ms Collins: In June 1988, I proposed a private member's resolution calling on the government to develop a strategy for managing the growing problem of plastics pollution. This resolution passed unanimously.

In February of this year, the House passed a private member's resolution calling on the government to examine its policies, programs and practices to ensure its compatibility with the principles of sustainable development.

In the last session, the government moved to reduce sulphur dioxide emissions through the Countdown Acid Rain program and ban chlorofluorocarbons to protect the ozone layer; increased funding and established new targets for province-wide recycling programs; implemented the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement, and created the Ontario Round Table on Environment and Economy to encourage sustainable development.

It is obvious that this government is concerned about the environment. There are some industries that are also concerned and active in the area of the environment, such as the Ontario Soft Drink Association. I applaud their efforts and contributions to Ontario Multi-Material Recycling Inc.

However, there are other manufacturers in this province who produce recyclable products such as plastic, newspaper and glass who are not yet involved in this worthwhile and necessary endeavour. Today, I call upon the government to encourage these industries to follow the lead of their peers.

All of us, members, government, industry and citizens, must continue our efforts if we are to succeed in passing on a healthy world to our children.

The Speaker: The member for Markham for 22 seconds.

ROUGE VALLEY

Mr Cousins: It is enough time just to put my dig in at the government for failing to mention anything about the Rouge Valley system in its speech from the throne. We have two dead river valley systems, the Don Valley and the Humber. Let's do something about the Rouge while there is still time.

This is a government that can do something about it. They have \$10 million from the federal government. Let's spend it and invest it in—

The Speaker: That completes the allotted time for members' statements.

Hon. Mr Sorbara: I am rising to seek the unanimous consent of the House to make a brief statement concerning Injured Workers' Day. After comments which I expect members of the opposition parties will want to make, I will also be asking for unanimous consent to have a moment of silence, and then consent as well that the flags at the Legislature and government buildings be lowered to half-mast tomorrow.

Agreed to.

INJURED WORKERS' DAY

JOUR DES TRAVAILLEURS BLESSÉS

Hon. Mr Sorbara: As honourable members know, tomorrow is worker memorial day. All across Ontario, workers will join together in memorial services to mourn and recognize their colleagues who have died because of workplace accidents and workplace illnesses.

Je pense également que, pour nous tous, ceci est une occasion de réfléchir sur le terrible coût

humain que représentent les accidents et les maladies du travail.

The government endorses the labour movement's initiative in setting 28 April, the anniversary of the passage of the workers' compensation act of Ontario, as an annual day to recognize those who have been injured or killed at work.

It is important that we, as legislators, ensure that this province has an occupational health and safety system that is as good as humanly possible in protecting the lives and the wellbeing of our workers. Therefore, the underlying principle of the occupational health and safety reform introduced in this House in January is that the workplace parties, management and labour, must work together in partnership and with government to bring about the safe and accident-free workplace that all working people in the province should be able to expect.

Nous tous dans cette Assemblée, ainsi que les travailleurs et le patronat de toute la province, devons faire du 28 avril une occasion de renouveler notre engagement et de rendre les lieux de travail en Ontario plus sécuritaires et plus sains grâce à nos efforts conjoints.

In keeping with this occasion, the flags, with the unanimous consent of members, at this Legislature and all government offices will be flown at half-mast throughout the day tomorrow. I have urged others in the province to do the same.

I now request, as I said, unanimous consent of this House, after the comments that I expect from the two opposition parties, that we rise for a moment of silence in recognition of those workers who have died or suffered grievous injury at work.

Mr Mackenzie: I rise in this House on this occasion with very mixed feelings. I am pleased that the House has accepted my request of yesterday to allow a minute of silence and to lower the flags to acknowledge the sacrifice of workers killed or injured on job sites across the country. I am obviously both proud and sad to represent New Democrats observing this day of mourning. These feelings compete with concern and more than a little anger that almost overrides the recognition.

Surely the purpose of this day of mourning is more than just to acknowledge the sacrifice made by workers as a result of unsafe workplaces and practices. The purpose of this day must be a renewal of a commitment by all of us that the sacrifice of a worker killed on the job and the resulting sorrow and hardship visited upon his or her family and friends was not in vain, that we

have learnt from the tragedy and that we reaffirm responsibility to see an end to the slaughter in the workplace.

This, I say to all of my colleagues in the House, and to the Premier (Mr Peterson) and Minister of Labour (Mr Sorbara) in particular, is where the anger I spoke of emerges. Have we learned a lesson? Are we meeting our responsibilities? Have we done right by those killed or injured on the job? I say to all of my colleagues in this House that we are not meeting our responsibility.

The final figures for last year indicate 293 deaths in the workplace. This is a 24 per cent increase over the previous year. As well, there were 489,819 injuries, of which 215,184 involved lost time. In less than four months this year, already 93 workers in Ontario have lost their lives. Almost every day another family will be grieving. We may well be heading for an all-time record.

We have seen a rash of mining deaths that should not have happened. We have had two more deaths recently of Canadian paperworkers. The Ontario Public Service Employees Union and the Canadian Union of Public Employees have reported deaths, and we have had the tragic death of a farm worker near Windsor, in an occupation where the workers are not even covered by health and safety legislation.

Words are not adequate to express the anger and concern all of us should feel at our failure. Can anyone in this House defend this slaughter in the workplace? Can anyone in this House reject the need for legislation that guarantees people the right to work and live and enjoy retirement in good health in so far as a safe workplace is concerned?

We should be ashamed of our lack of enforcement of safety in the workplace. We should be ashamed that we do not have in place legislation, including Bill 208, to give people a right and responsibility in ensuring a safe workplace. Their memory must serve us to fight like hell for the living, to fight for improvements to health and safety and to fight for their enforcement in this province. It is time we accepted our responsibilities, and if I can use the veterans' phrase, say, "We shall remember them."

1350

Mr Brandt: I am proud to rise today and respond on behalf of our party to the opening comments made by the Minister of Labour, and I rise to recognize the initiative of Canada's labour

movement in recognizing worker memorial day tomorrow, 28 April.

Having been a representative of the government and now in opposition, I stand here proud of the strides this province has made when I see all that has been accomplished, and I am equally proud to recognize the men and the women who have contributed in building this very great province of ours. Many of those people have suffered untimely deaths and far too many have suffered debilitating injuries.

Men and women in Ontario have suffered a great deal and it is important that we recognize their loss today, as we are doing. But I feel hope for future generations of workers. Throughout the province, workers are coming together in memorial services. I see unity and strength in the flags that will fly at half-mast.

It was 74 years ago today that Ontario's Conservative government passed the very first workers' compensation act in all of Canada, and for over seven decades this province has believed in the need to protect injured workers. Much has been done, but I recognize that much more remains to be done.

Today, workers succumb to a variety of job-related injuries that our predecessors would never have imagined. As legislators in this province, it is our task to provide as safe and as clean a workplace as possible. Where circumstances bring about a twist of fate that causes injury, we must have in place the legislation that takes care of that individual.

Over the past year, the working people of this province have made strong statements to us as legislators. They have made it clear that it is time for a change. Today, as we rise to celebrate the people who have risked all for us and to honour the memory of those who have died working on behalf of this province in their various fields of endeavour, we must reaffirm our vow to progressively amend the Workers' Compensation Act.

Platitudes ring hollow. This day provides us with the opportunity to focus on protection and rehabilitation. Let us not lose that in the days and months ahead. Two hundred and ninety-three deaths last year is simply too great a loss. We can do better, and we must do better to protect workers from serious injury, and in far too many cases, death.

The Speaker: I ask all members to rise and join with me in a minute's silence in remembrance of those who lost their lives in the workplace.

The House observed one minute's silence.

The Speaker: Thank you. I will fulfil your request. Tomorrow the flags in front of this building will be flown at half-mast.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

FEDERAL BUDGET

Hon R. F. Nixon: I would like to report to the House on those matters from the federal budget that affect Ontario's economy and fiscal position. These measures include reductions to federal support for health care and post-secondary education; deferral of the Canada child care bill; increased federal sales taxes, personal income taxes and corporate income taxes; contraction of regional economic assistance programs; alterations to the unemployment insurance program and other measures.

Ontario has expressed concern about the erosion of federal commitments to national programs. This budget further reduces federal commitments to the historic partnership that has supported health and post-secondary education. Taken together, previous reductions introduced by the federal government to established programs financing entitlements for Ontario amounted to approximately \$970 million last year and will exceed \$1 billion this fiscal year. Measures introduced with this budget will further reduce federal support for health and post-secondary education in Ontario by \$75 million in 1991.

With these changes, Ottawa's share of these program costs will be reduced from the historical level of 51 per cent in 1979-80 to less than 38 per cent in this year.

The federal government estimates expenditure savings of \$175 million nationally as a result of its deferral of the Canada child care bill. This will entail a loss to Ontario of approximately \$50 million this year. Provinces in general will therefore not receive the 75 per cent subsidy for child care capital promised by the federal government since 1987.

The deferral, in general, is disappointing, since the Canada child care program would have complemented Ontario's commitment to child care announced in the New Directions policy. However, Ottawa will continue to share costs of child care services under the Canada assistance plan. I should note, as members will be aware, that the budget indicates the Canada assistance plan will be maintained at its traditional level.

One billion dollars will be taken out of Ontario's economy to pay for the changes to the unemployment insurance program. These

changes will reduce Ontario's personal income and corporate income tax revenues by approximately \$80 million.

Proposed changes to the current federal sales tax will provide approximately \$60 million in additional revenue to Ontario through our retail sales tax.

Federal changes to tobacco taxes will result in a substantial reduction in the level of tobacco consumption in Ontario. It is estimated that this measure will result in a reduction of approximately \$85 million in Ontario's tobacco tax revenues.

Increases in federal fuel and excise taxes will add approximately 2.4 cents per litre to the cost of gasoline, bringing the total federal tax to 12.1 cents per litre as compared to Ontario's tax of 9.3 cents per litre for unleaded. Including these tax increases, the federal government will collect approximately \$1.7 billion in motive fuel tax revenues in Ontario; and the honourable members will know, the federal government does not spend anything on our roads.

The federal government has also proposed to recover family allowances and old age security payments from individuals with incomes over \$50,000. This measure will reduce Ontario's revenues by \$45 million.

The overall impact of federal tax measures results in a revenue loss to Ontario of approximately \$160 million. As well, federal expenditure reductions are estimated to cost Ontario about \$135 million. Slower real economic growth reduces Ontario's revenues by approximately \$200 million on a full-year basis.

These initial estimates indicate a substantive shifting of the federal fiscal burden to the provinces. The net negative fiscal impact of the federal budget is presently estimated to be approximately \$500 million on a full-year basis.

The clear shifting of the fiscal burden puts provincial initiatives at risk; but the honourable member who made a statement earlier will be glad to know, and I can assure members, that the throne speech commitments will be met and that we will honour our agenda.

Federal budget measures are also cause for concern about the impact on Canada's economic performance; that is, lower real growth, higher inflation and lower job creation. Federal actions are bound to take some of the momentum out of future growth prospects. The lasting implications of the federal budget for the economy have yet to be assessed.

The excise and sales tax changes in the federal budget will raise the consumer price inflation rate

in Canada by a full percentage point over the next few months. Raising interest rates to counter this kind of temporary development would certainly be inappropriate in the face of a weakening economy.

The federal budget reduces regional development assistance to Ontario over the next five years to less than half that provided over the last five years. This reduction is a matter of concern, particularly if it materially affects support for renewal of Ontario's forest resources.

Even with these major steps, the federal deficit at \$30.5 billion is \$1.6 billion or 5.5 per cent higher than last year's deficit of \$28.9 billion. The federal debt is a national problem. Canadians accept that the deficit has to be reduced. The Minister of Finance indicated the "budget measures will cut the annual deficit in half to \$15 billion by 1993-94." I wish the federal minister well in that endeavour.

1400

RESPONSES

FEDERAL BUDGET

Mr Reville: As is appropriate, the Treasurer of Ontario (Mr R. F. Nixon) has advised the House, perhaps a day or so earlier than we all expected, of the impact of the federal budget on the province. I appreciate the fact that he has so advised us.

I think it would be very wrong of people in Ontario if they believed any of the contents of the federal budget were a mystery to the provincial Treasurer, and in fact what is happening today is a statement of impacts that the provincial Treasurer has known about for some time and for which we hope he has planned.

We will see, I guess, on 16 May or 17 May, when the provincial Treasurer brings forth the budget for Ontario, whether or not that planning has been adequate and whether or not the Treasurer will do what he said he must do, one of three things, or perhaps some of all three things: to borrow, to cut or to tax.

We will not sit by idly and watch this provincial government do what clearly the federal government is doing, and that is passing the buck to another level of government without passing any bucks to cover the responsibilities that are entailed. We have seen already that this provincial government is quite prepared to slough responsibility off on to the municipalities, a lower level of government, whenever it seems appropriate to it.

The Treasurer probably remembers, because he pays very careful attention to many of the

things that I do, that on 8 March I was pleased to join with my federal cousin, Chris Axworthy, in a press conference about established programs financing. We indicated at that time our concern that the feds would chisel us out of money that is used to put on programs we value very strongly here in Ontario, and from my point of view, the health programs.

I would like to turn the floor over to one of my colleagues to carry on with this diatribe.

Mr Wildman: I am sure my friend the member for Norfolk (Mr Miller) would want me to raise concern about the comment of the Treasurer on the bottom of page 2 of his statement, in which he raises concern about the increases in tobacco taxes.

Considering the problems facing the flue-cured tobacco industry and the farmers with the Redux program, it is surprising the Treasurer would raise this concern not on the basis of what it will do to Ontario farmers, but rather that it will cost him \$85 million in revenue. Does this mean the Treasurer is going to increase provincial tobacco taxes to make up the difference?

Mr R. F. Johnston: Much of the tone of this statement is, "Darn it, they got the money first and we are not going to get our shot at those rich senior citizens and others." It is really sad. It is strange.

He bemoans the fact of this supposed program of child care not being initiated. But he knows, as the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr Sweeney) knows, that CAP, the Canada assistance plan, is a method that is an awful lot better for us right at the moment to increase subsidized spaces and real day care needs than was that proposed Tory plan, unless he wants to be sort of the Machiavelli of Brant-Haldimand and wants to try to fund the education system somehow through child care dollars.

I am sure we are all happy the government's agenda is going to be followed, whatever that means. When we read the throne speech it is very difficult to know what it means. But it is nice to know the Treasurer has changed his mind since this morning on radio when he said, in talking about this problem of whether or not he can fund the kindergarten programs, and I quote, "We have to decide whether we'll make up for all of it by raising taxes here, or reallocating our money in the province or not allowing the programs to grow as fast as we would like."

Is he going to make the Minister of Education (Mr Ward) a hero for a day only, or is he going to stick by the plans to fund education in an appropriate fashion?

Just finally, I would say that when you look at his complaints about the loss of money to the post-secondary institutions of the province and to health care, it is important to note that he is talking about a difference this year of only \$75 million dollars. That had better not be used as an excuse not to fund them appropriately here in Ontario.

Mr Harris: I want to comment as well on the statement by the Treasurer. The Treasurer indicates on page 4 of his statement: "The federal debt is a national problem. Canadians accept that the deficit has to be reduced." For that particular statement, I congratulate the Treasurer.

There were no surprises last night, other than the surprise that it came last night. There really were no surprises, other than some of the figures and statistics, which had to seriously cause concern among Canadians, had to reinforce what the Treasurer said here and had to reinforce some of our real fears as Canadians.

When you look at the amount of money being paid in interest on the national debt, now close to 35 cents of every federal dollar, that is a shocking figure, which I guess some of us knew about. I think people are beginning to understand the fact that \$39 billion of federal money is being paid in interest on the debt alone, and \$39 billion is equivalent to our entire provincial budget. Ottawa must pay that amount of money, not on programs, not on services, but just to service that debt. That is an increase from \$33 billion to \$39 billion in one year, a \$6-billion increase in one year. I think Canadians are beginning to accept that this indeed is the biggest problem facing Canada.

I say this to the Treasurer: One of the concerns I have is that while he recognizes it in part of his statement, in the other parts of his statement and for the last three or four years, when we on this side of the House have been saying we ought to watch how we are spending money here in Ontario, because this federal debt is the biggest problem we face and this federal debt is financed primarily by the 10 million Ontarians—we share the bulk of that debt, the people in this province. I believe the 10 million taxpayers who pay federal taxes, who pay provincial taxes and who pay municipal taxes are a little tired of politicians from all three levels of government saying: "Don't blame me. These guys aren't spending where they should."

Reference here where the Treasurer says: "You note there is none of that money going into roads. We had hoped the federal government would do this. We want the federal government

to cost-share the sewer and water infrastructure repairs that have to be done." Yet as the richest province continues to insist and demand that the federal government do more and more for this province, we are driving the taxpayers of Ontario farther and farther into debt.

Even in the Treasurer's remarks today, his comments about what this will do to Ontario, he is shifting responsibility to the municipalities. I believe that if the Treasurer honestly believes what he is saying here, if he indeed wishes the federal Minister of Finance well in the endeavour to reduce the annual deficit to \$15 billion by 1993-94—this is a laudable goal—I think he has to do more than wish him well.

On behalf of the taxpayers of Ontario who pay the bulk of this interest charge, who bear the bulk of this burden, whose children and children's children in this province are inheriting the bulk of this debt, what is the Treasurer going to do to help? He has to be part of the solution on behalf of Ontario's taxpayers, not as Ontario's Treasurer but on behalf of Ontario's taxpayers.

I say to all members, we must collectively be part of this solution. We cannot continually ask more and more and more of a government that is virtually bankrupt.

I call on all three parties, and I call on all politicians in Ontario, municipal, provincial and federal, to say we had better start working together to solve this problem.

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ORAL QUESTIONS

CHILD CARE

Mr Allen: Moments ago, the Treasurer noted that under the budget papers tabled by the federal Minister of Finance, this government will be losing \$50 million it had originally intended to devote to child care services in this province in the coming year. That amounts to approximately one sixth of the entire budget. Thousands of parents, administrators, day care workers and municipalities must now be wondering precisely how the Treasurer is going to proceed with that loss of money, how he will make up the problems on capital grants and so on.

Will the Treasurer explain to us in some detail how he plans to make up that difference and how he plans to proceed in order to fulfil his government's objectives in order to provide accessible, affordable child care as a public service to the people of Ontario?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I believe the best answer was provided by the honourable member's colleague in his earlier statement, with which I

agree; that is, the province was intending to finance most of its day care shared-cost responsibilities in the future under the Canada assistance plan in any case. Now, there is certain capital financing that will have to be forgone by the fact that the federal government is not going forward with the legislation.

The honourable member will recall that the legislation had in fact passed the House of Commons before the election. It had not been ratified by the Senate and therefore had not been fully enacted and did not become law. They are not proceeding with it at this time, and we have some concern that in the long run, a fully staffed, universal day care system for the province would cost well in excess of \$6 billion; even the advanced and progressive plans put forward by my colleague the honourable minister responsible had envisaged a continuing and substantial shared-cost support by the federal government. We believe that as long as the Canada assistance plan remains unimpaired, our program in this regard should be able to go forward.

Mr Allen: That does bring me to my next question. To bring the Treasurer down to earth, just last June, the government imposed a freeze on anticipated expansion in Metropolitan Toronto and some other centres, which led to a major problem in the delivery of subsidized spaces. The minister will remember that, on the one hand, there was an excess of spaces all over the system but an inability of low-income people to access them by virtue of the absence of subsidies. There are now 7,000 persons across the province on those waiting lists.

I want to ask the minister, now that he is freed of the restrictions of the Canada Childcare Act and is free, under the Canada assistance plan, to access 50-cent dollars from the federal government, will he in fact go back to that cost-shared funding and fully fund the spaces that are now waiting out there to be funded, fully remove those waiting lists from the backs of the municipalities with the Canada assistance plan moneys?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member reflects the view of most of us in this House when we say that the rapidly expanding demand for day care facilities is one of the major problems that we have to face by way of finance and, of course, administration and seeing that we have adequate staffing for all of these facilities.

I think you are also aware that there are many other very strong and emergent requirements, not the least of them being school capital. The list is very long indeed, involving environmental pro-

grams and a wide variety of infrastructure, not only in the urban areas but right across the province.

I well recall the problems that the metropolitan area faced when the waiting list for day care grew much faster than the provision of spaces. The minister, in meeting these requirements, has put forward a plan which, in a reasonable period of time, we feel will meet this requirement. Certainly it is our aim, in the long run, to have universal access to day care, and we cannot achieve that at a rate that is faster than the one that is presently planned.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Now that we know the Treasurer had planned to use the proposed Canada Childcare Act as his means of funding junior kindergarten extension in the province, and that he had planned essentially just to use that as his means of dealing with child care and not using the Ministry of Community and Social Services approach we have had in the past; now that option is no longer open to him because the Canada assistance plan does not allow him to use it in the same fashion, how does he intend to progress and pay for the kindergarten expansion plans the government so proudly announced in the throne speech?

Hon R. F. Nixon: With a judicious allocation of our taxation resources over the next four to five years, and I have already assured the House that the implementation of the commitment made in the throne speech will proceed on schedule. Have faith.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Reville: My question is also to the Treasurer. He mentioned earlier that changes in established programs financing will result in perhaps \$60 million less revenue to be spent in the area of health care. Having in mind the Treasurer's earlier remarks today that one of the ways he could make up these shortfalls would be to increase taxes, my concern today is to learn whether the Treasurer will make a commitment to the Legislature now that he will not increase Ontario health insurance plan premiums.

Hon R. F. Nixon: I do not think it would be appropriate for me to give any particular assurances when the honourable member himself indicated that we are within two or three weeks of budget day. I can recall the problems last year in getting the official opposition to agree to allow me, as Treasurer, to put forward my funding plan by way of a budget to the House. Now the honourable member is anxious for me to reveal it at his particular behest. The Premier (Mr

Peterson) and I and my colleagues are glad to get advice from the honourable member and anyone else but we are in the process of making our final decisions on the basis of funding a wide variety of programs and I will let the honourable member know those decisions at an appropriate time.

Mr Reville: The advice of the New Democrats to the Treasurer would be, seeing that OHIP premiums are paid largely by low-income people, that it would be an inappropriate place to get additional revenue.

My next question relates also to health. We have seen in recent weeks a high-priced media campaign by the Ministry of Health to try to convince Ontario taxpayers that it has a handle on the health care system. Among the issues raised in the media campaign are indeed some good ideas, like comprehensive health organizations, manpower planning and new responsibilities for nurses. Although the pace is far too glacial for us, we would like the Treasurer's commitment today that the federal budget will not retard in any way these advances in trying to reform the health care system.

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member indicated that OHIP premiums are paid largely by low-income individuals. I think if he gave that some further thought he would know it is not true: 70 per cent of the OHIP premiums are paid by corporations on behalf of their employees and 30 per cent are paid by individuals.

The honourable member, of course, like all honourable members in this House, has thought-ful employers who pay 100 per cent of his OHIP premiums. That is certainly appreciated; the taxpayers are quite generous as far as we are concerned.

I was not aware that the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) had entered upon some extensive and expensive advertising scheme. She is the best spokesman for health care that we have in Canada and we are very proud to be associated with her. I believe her herculean efforts have convinced people that the leadership we have given is effective, that we are proud of the services given by our doctors, impressed by the quality of our hospitals and that we want to maintain those services no matter what other levels of government try to do to reduce that funding.

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Mr Reville: The Treasurer's lecture about who pays OHIP premiums left out the fact that it is largely the poor who do not get their premiums paid by their employer and that although premium assistance has been improved in suc-

cessive budgets, you still have to pay 75 per cent of your premium if you are a family of four earning \$17,380. That is the generosity of this Treasurer.

My final question relates to something a little bit more abstract. I have picked an abstract one for the Treasurer because I know he likes this stuff. There are three pillars of Canada's social welfare state. One has been family allowances, another has been old age security and lately, because of our party, medicare has been the third. We have seen the feds begin to erode two of those universal principles.

The Speaker: Question?

Mr Reville: Can I count on this Treasurer to stand firm behind the principle of universality in our health care system or will he find the federal approach so seductive that he will follow it as well?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I do not find anything Tories do seductive whether they are in government or out—nothing personal, I say to the member for Sarnia (Mr Brandt)—but I can assure the member for Riverdale that the principle of universality will be maintained by this government; until of course someone near me makes some decision otherwise.

I should also point out to the honourable member that the OHIP premium base presently collects for us about \$1,743,000,000 and the overall cost of medicare is about \$12.5 billion, so the premiums are paying just a bit over 12 per cent. I am sure the member is aware that during the tenure of this government they have been falling from just under 20 per cent. This is a matter we are paying quite careful attention to.

FEDERAL BUDGET

Mr Brandt: I also have a question for the Treasurer and I trust this will not be too seductive for the Treasurer to handle. I want the Treasurer to be aware of the fact that those of us in this party consider him to be a fairminded man, particularly when he was—

[Applause]

Mr Brandt: Members did not let me finish. They should not applaud in anticipation of the remainder of the sentence. I wanted to say that he is a fairminded man and was particularly fairminded when he was in opposition. Having said that, the Treasurer recognizes that the federal debt-servicing cost, at some 35 cents out of every dollar collected by the federal Minister of Finance—a figure that is increasing, as my colleague from North Bay pointed out—is a

tremendous burden which has an upward pressure on interest rates, which causes serious problems in terms of the federal government being able to finance shared-cost programs with the various provincial governments.

Will the Treasurer not agree, as he alluded to in his statement today, that as a result of the recognition over some long number of years the federal debt was an increasing problem, that the Minister of Finance did have to, out of necessity, take severe measures, harsh though they might be—

The Speaker: Do you have a question?

Mr Brandt: —in order to keep that deficit under reasonable control? Will the Treasurer not agree that is correct?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I do not mind agreeing with that. I simply point out again, as the honourable member noticed, that his best efforts still leave our deficit \$2 billion larger than it was a year ago. I think that most of us, without regard to our political loyalties, must have some concern about that particular fact, that this—once again I have to use the word—herculean effort has resulted not in a decrease in the deficit, but an increase. I also made reference to the fact that the Minister of Finance's longer-range projection, as it has in each of his budgets, indicated better years to come. I hope he is correct.

Mr Brandt: The Treasurer surely will realize that the debt is coming down from the highs that were established leading up to 1984. The Treasurer has made statements in the past to the effect that because municipalities have a lower debt load than the province of Ontario, the municipalities should be sharing some of the costs for some programs and perhaps financing those because they may well be in a better financial position than the provincial government.

I would say, by way of comparison, that it would appear that the provincial government is in a better financial position than the federal government. Does it then not follow logically, using his own examples, that the provincial government should be sharing some of the cost burden in order to ease this deficit problem at the federal level?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am surprised and, in fact, appalled that the honourable leader of the Progressive Conservative Party would even attempt to defend the budget that was released in a rather awkward way last night.

The fact is that the government of Canada has seen fit to have a new approach to the funding of

medicare and post-secondary education which reduces resources to the provinces, including this province and all other provinces; that they are no longer going to participate in such programs as planting trees in the north; that they are going to cut rail transportation, and that they are withdrawing from their commitment to have special legislation to fund child care. I cannot imagine that the honourable member would try to defend those initiatives. The only explanation is that he is about to hang up his political skates.

Mr Brandt: No, I am not about to hang up my political skates, but I will tell the Treasurer that he cannot have it both ways. On one hand, he has indicated that all Canadians recognize that the federal government has a structural deficit problem that must be addressed; on the other hand, he has stated quite emphatically in the last few moments that he anticipates that it will be business as usual and that transfer grants will not in any way be disrupted, in spite of the fact that he knows this is part of the structural problem the federal government is attempting to come to grips with. If he were the federal Minister of Revenue, what would he have done to reduce the deficit?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I can only call the honourable member's attention to my record. When we took office in 1985, the deficit was very large. The member criticized me for raising taxes. I will tell him that we have had—and I do not admit it, I assert it—a substantial and progressive expansion of our tax base to pay our bills.

The government of Canada has not done that. Instead of meeting their responsibilities over these years, they now find themselves in a position that is serious. The honourable leader of the Progressive Conservative Party in the House has indicated that is so. He asks what I would have done. He need only look at my record to see what I have done because I have already done it.

Mr Harris: The federal government has created a budget designed to attack the deficit. The Treasurer has pointed out that in his view, he did not go far enough. Some of us share that view, that unfortunately he was not able to go far enough. But the Treasurer acknowledged today that Canada's deficit is one of the biggest issues facing Ontario taxpayers today. We are Canada's richest province, the one which pays the brunt of the interest payments on the deficit, now around 35 cents.

In my view and in the view of many, the Treasurer and the government of Ontario need to do more than just identify this problem; they need

to be part of the solution. I would ask the Treasurer what he is prepared to do to be part of the solution to this federal debt problem.

Hon R. F. Nixon: I think our best plan, in response to the honourable member's question, is to continue what we have shown we can do over the past four years, that is, to establish government programs and tax bases that instil confidence in this jurisdiction to allow business to expand, to allow our resources to have reasonable markets and to allow our community to have confidence in our education and medicare systems.

I believe we have been able to do this in a fiscally responsible way by reducing our deficit year by year and keeping our taxes on a fair and equitable basis that is acknowledged by all of our citizens.

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Mr Harris: This Treasurer said he had a couple of options this morning. He said he could either cut services, such as reforestation, or increase taxes to cover the estimated \$200 million that would be cut from the increase in transfers to Ontario this year.

In 1982, our current Treasurer said to the then Treasurer, Mr Miller:

"I do feel this whole approach towards blaming the federal government for all our own provincial economic inadequacies and difficulties is a serious attempt to mislead the electorate into removing the pressures from the government of Ontario for the problems it is going to be facing in the next few days and the next few weeks as it is forced to bring down a budget."

As this Treasurer advocated provincial treasurers must do in 1982, is the Treasurer today willing to accept sole responsibility for any tax increases or cuts in promised programs that may be contained in the upcoming provincial budget?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am not sure that the honourable member got the tone I had intended in my statement, because if he considered that as some sort of an attack on the policies of the government of Canada, I can assure you, Mr Speaker, the honourable member is wrong.

I asked the officials in the Treasury to provide me with information that was factual. They have an excellent reputation going back many years for being able to do that. There is no particular tone in it, other than to indicate to the House the impact of the federal budget on our Treasury and the economy of Ontario. As I see it, that is my job.

When it comes to responding to that by way of our own budget, I will give that the most careful

consideration. When I put that before the honourable members of the House, there may be some political complexion to it; but once again it would be totally factual, since it deals with taxes and the allocation of those revenues for the good of the province as a whole.

Mr Harris: There are \$220 million of increases in personal income taxes, announced last year, to come into effect this year in the Ontario budget. That is new revenue for 1989 that the Treasurer announced last year.

After six consecutive years of economic and employment growth; after the Liberal government of Ontario has already increased personal taxes, corporate taxes, land transfer taxes—over 19 taxes—and charges for permits and licences, a tax grab unprecedented in Ontario's history; given all that cumulative new money that has accrued to the Treasurer over the past four years and the \$220 million in already announced tax increases for this year that he announced last year, is the Treasurer not able to say that he will not raise taxes in his upcoming budget and he will not cut the services that Ontario taxpayers have already paid for?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The short answer is no, I am not prepared to say that. We do not intend to cut services, we do not like to raise taxes and we do not like to borrow money, but governments have got to balance their requirements to provide the services that the people, the taxpayers, the citizens in the communities, really require.

I think the honourable member would be the first to acknowledge that by a judicious application of the revenues that he has referred to we have been able to move away from the position that we inherited, which was a situation where the government of the day was borrowing to pay for the regular operation of government. We have moved well away from that and we have a fully balanced budget as far as the operation of the government is concerned. There is nothing really new about that, since we are now in the third year of that balanced situation.

The surplus that is associated with our operating budget is entirely allocated to our capital expenditures. These are roads and new buildings, such as we are building in North Bay for the Ministry of Correctional Services; new courthouses, such as we have built in the city of North Bay; all the facilities for highways of the type that serve North Bay and many other communities of the province. We are able to pay for a large proportion of those out of our regular revenue, so we feel that our fiscal responsibility

has been lived up to and we are very proud of that record.

MINING SAFETY

Mr Mackenzie: I have a very serious question for the Minister of Labour. The minister will know that loose rock and rock falls are the runaway killers of miners in Ontario. I would like to ask him if the following two regulations were not put in place, as a result of a multitude of deaths, to deal with that.

Section 63(2) of the regulations says, "Where a ground condition indicates that a rock burst or uncontrollable fall of ground may occur, the condition shall be recorded in writing by the supervisor of the work shift and signed by him, and the record shall describe the state of corrective measures taken." Section 65 states, "Where there is a danger or a hazard to a worker, the same shall be closed by barricades, fencing or other suitable means and warning signs shall be posted."

I would like to ask the minister if it is not true that on 17 February 1988, the workers in 1081 No. 6 stope in the Dome mine in Timmins reported drummy, loose rock and unsafe conditions and that these regulations were not carried out; and three days later, on 20 February, those three miners were dead. Can the minister tell us why those regulations are not being enforced in an area that we know is the chief killer of miners?

The Speaker: Order. The question has been asked. Minister?

Hon Mr Sorbara: I want to tell my friend that both of those regulations are enforced within the mining sector in Ontario. I can neither confirm nor negate his suggestion that there had been notice of loose ground in that area, however.

Mr Mackenzie: I suggest the minister get a look at the letter that has gone to Mr Kivisto in detail from Norm Carriere of the United Steelworkers in this particular case, outlining the circumstances.

Given that one of the purposes of Bill 208 that his government has tabled in the House is to deal with just such situations and give the workers some control over whether or not they are going to be working in an area that they have already said is hazardous—we now have the statement from the Premier (Mr Peterson) that the minister may not be proceeding with Bill 208—can the minister tell us when we are going to see Bill 208 and when we will see that kind of legislation in place in this House to protect workers in situations like this at the Dome mine in Timmins?

Hon Mr Sorbara: As to the first part of the question, the issue of when we will have second reading of Bill 208 in this House is a matter that I expect the three House leaders will be discussing some time in the near future.

Let me just say, though, on the question of ground control in mines, that there have been, regrettably, some five fatalities this year as a result of fall of rock, and this is a terribly serious issue with tragic results in five cases. The ministry is currently working on a number of procedures which, if I can sum them up for my friend and the House, will require that in any such area ground will be secured before there is any work taking place under it, and before that ground is appropriately secured it will be supported.

We have directed ourselves to this issue as it is our obligation to do and we are in the process now of disseminating among mining companies and joint health and safety committees new procedures that we trust and that we hope will prevent such tragedies from occurring again.

CANCER TREATMENT

Mr Eves: I have a question of the Minister of Health. My question concerns the cancer treatment centre for northeastern Ontario, to which her government has committed some \$22 million to build and another \$7.3 million to give Laurentian Hospital some support staff. I know that the minister is aware of the difficulty they have been having for many months now to get Dr Ho, whom they would like to head their research department, licensed by the Ontario College of Physicians and Surgeons.

I understand that Dr Corringham, the director of the program, wrote to the minister on 24 February of this year and has never received a reply; but I also understand that the minister met with him and the member for Sudbury (Mr Campbell) as well as other officials of the district health council on Monday of this week. Dr Corringham wrote to me on Tuesday of this week and he says in conclusion, "Unfortunately, the meeting was inconclusive."

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Dr Corringham feels very strongly that without—

The Speaker: The question?

Mr Eves: —that without Dr Ho as the licensed director of research for the cancer centre it will not be able to implement its necessary programs. Is the minister going to see to it that Dr Ho gets the appropriate accreditation in Ontario that he deserves?

Hon Mrs Caplan: As the member knows, I met with Dr Corringham and representatives from Sudbury and Laurentian in my office just this past week. We discussed this and other matters relating to my priority, which is the provision of care for the people of Sudbury. I supported Dr Corringham and his efforts in making sure that the staff in Sudbury are of top-notch quality to deliver that service to the people.

The member should also know that the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario has responsibility, as the autonomous profession in the practice of medicine, for licensing requirements for its members.

Mr Eves: Dr Ho's qualifications as an oncologist are among the best in the world. The minister knows that there is a shortage of Canadian oncologists and that Dr Ho is the only person who applied for this position as head of research in Sudbury.

When Dr Ho phoned the college recently, he was asked by an official at the college, "Have you ever been to Sudbury?" When he said yes he had, the official said: "Why would you ever want to go there? If you are ever licensed in the province of Ontario, we will see to it that your licence will be so restrictive that you'll never be able to practise anywhere else in Ontario."

Does the minister think this is an appropriate approach for the college to be taking and will she exercise the power and the duty she has under section 3 of her act to direct the council of the college of physicians and surgeons to change the licensing process so people like Dr Ho—

The Speaker: Order. Would the member take his seat?

Hon Mrs Caplan: The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario has responsibility for assessing qualifications of physicians and for approving licensing. As I told Dr Corringham and I say to the members of this House, the Ministry of Health does not interfere in that assessment and licensing procedure.

For the information of the member, I understand that in fact the college of physicians and surgeons has suggested that following an additional year in Sudbury under supervision, Dr Ho could be assessed at the University of Ottawa over a one-month period to allow it to assess his qualifications appropriately.

I would say to the member that when we talk about appropriate manpower planning and meeting the needs of the people of Ontario, I believe that the long-term solution is for the Ontario Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation to

develop a strategic plan for meeting the needs of cancer care in this province.

TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

Mr Tatham: My question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. A recent article in the Toronto Star issue dated 2 April says:

"Under the Canada-US free trade agreement, hundreds of varieties of Mexican-made components will find their way into American products that will be eligible for duty-free entry into Canada. Several hundred Canadian workers have been laid off over the past few years by companies that have already established Maquiladora operations. By relocating in Mexico, they take advantage of cheap labour and can import into the United States without having to pay duty on the American content of their goods."

I ask the minister, what are the free trade arrangements on this type of operation?

Hon Mr Kwinter: The United States, under its Tariff Act, has a provision that allows American companies to ship their goods to foreign countries and then import them back with duty being paid only on the value added component that takes place in that country. The Maquiladora zone of Mexico has been doing this for 25 years and Canada is doing the same thing.

Under the free trade agreement it will not have an impact, because any product that comes from Mexico into the United States must meet the same content requirements of at least 50 per cent before it can be exported to Canada and get any benefits under the free trade agreement. Our records have shown that in the past the average content is about 75 per cent, so at the present time it is not a problem.

Mr Tatham: What is the impact of all this on our workers in Ontario?

Hon Mr Kwinter: The impact is that we are going to have to become very competitive in a way other than labour costs. At the present time, there are workers in Mexico who are being paid \$1 an hour, but there are problems with that Mexican labour in that it is not skilled, and there are infrastructure problems. What we have to do in Canada and in Ontario—and that is what the Premier's Council is advocating—is train our workers and get our skills to the point where we can be truly competitive. I think we can compete.

CLEANTARIO

Mrs Grier: My question is for the Minister of the Environment and it concerns Cleantario.

[Laughter]

Mrs Grier: Frankly, I do not see this as a joke. I see it as rather sad that a minister who started out with such hope and such good initial initiatives should have been reduced to gambling with our children's future.

I want to quote from some old speeches of the minister, when he talked about the environmental security fund and said, "This fund finances a quick cleanup in emergencies, allowing us to ensure that the polluter pays"; or on the spills bill, "This is not paid for by innocent victims or from the public purse, but rather by those who profit from owning or carrying hazardous material and therefore should underwrite any risks to the community."

Can the minister explain what happened to the principle of "Let the polluter pay" and why he has reduced environmental cleanup to a game of chance?

Hon Mr Bradley: The member would know that there is absolutely no change in that policy. She would know that the funding that will be provided through this—and by the way, it was people who are sensitive to the environment who gave me this particular idea; it was not people who are not sensitive to the environment.

In all those instances where the polluter pays, the polluter pays. This is additional funding over and above, first of all, that which is allocated through the regular process. The member will know we have had an increase of some 51 per cent in the past three years.

Second, everything for which the polluters are responsible, the polluters will continue to pay. The member will want to know, for instance, that there are environment groups, there are universities, there are others who are saying from time to time, "We have some special projects which would be worthy of funding."

I am looking to say that there are a number of environment groups, there are a number of initiatives which government would normally take in the province of Ontario which would have nothing to do with "the polluter pays." The polluter pays in the instances where the polluter is responsible.

I want to assure the member, because I think she would want that kind of assurance, that this money is over and above any other money that would be there, and as long as I am the Minister of the Environment, the polluters in this province will continue to pay the price.

Mrs Grier: We know where the idea of an environmental lottery came from. It came straight from Bill Vander Zalm's Fantasyland. I

quote from the British Columbia budget of 1989, "Lottery funding for environmental projects." Is that the model that this Minister of the Environment is going to follow? Is he unable to establish a clear priority for funding for environmental cleanup in this government? Are we going to be reduced to how many lottery tickets we buy before we can get a cleanup? Is that going to be—

The Speaker: That is three questions.

Hon Mr Bradley: Three questions there, yes.

First of all, I can assure the member that indeed it was environmentally conscious people in the province of Ontario who several months ago suggested this particular idea to me, for money, again, over and above that which is normally provided through the budgetary process in the province of Ontario.

I have found the response to be very positive. I have found people in this province who have said: "Look, you people in Ontario operate lotteries in any event. You have for a number of years. Why don't you begin to devote funds from the lottery funds as well as from general taxation and over and above what we force the polluters to pay?"

The polluters in this province pay far more than they do in any other province, even on a per company basis, let alone because we have the most companies in this province. These people are delighted with the opportunity they will have to make a direct contribution to what they feel is an environmental improvement to this province.

So I tell the member she is welcome to make a contribution voluntarily in that regard. I know of her strong commitment to the environment, so I know she will indeed be participating in this. The Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) has a strong commitment to the environment. That is why he has allocated so much funding over the last three years and why the Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Mr Elston) has allocated so many staff and so much resources over the years.

1450

VEHICLE EMISSIONS

Mr Villeneuve: To the same minister, the throne speech talked about reducing automobile emissions, which contribute quite extensively to air pollution. The minister realizes that unleaded fuel sold here uses a metallic octane enhancer based on manganese called MMT. MMT is said to be safe at all levels here in Ontario, but it is banned in many countries including the United States. Can the minister assure this House that any new policies on automobile fuels will look at

the replacement of metallic octane enhancers by safer alcohol additives?

Hon Mr Bradley: This sounds like a very good suggestion that has come along from time to time from a variety of sources. I know the member has a genuine concern in that direction. I am most willing to explore this idea to its greatest extent, because I think this member is bringing to the attention of the House a matter of great importance. I would be willing to converse with him further on this and explore every possibility with the potential for implementing it if it is desirable in this province.

Mr Villeneuve: I am glad the Premier (Mr Peterson) is here to listen to that answer. I hope he does something about it. I just wonder who the minister is.

The federal standing committee on energy, mines and resources found some years ago that alcohol additives substantially reduce carbon monoxide emissions, as well as others such as benzene. The Royal Society of Canada, in its 1986 report, found that alcohol blends present an attractive health and environmental alternative to the increased use of MMT.

The minister was not listening a while ago. MMT is banned in the United States, it is banned in most countries and it is considered safe here in Ontario. Is the minister ready today to commit his government and some funds towards serious examination of using alcohol additives to replace metallic octane enhancers?

Hon Mr Bradley: As the member would know, in the speech from the throne that was read here on Tuesday in the House there was an indication we would be taking a number of initiatives that will be designed to improve automobile emissions.

I was just at a meeting of the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers in Montreal last Wednesday where this matter was discussed at some length. I shared with my colleagues who sit from the various provinces and with the federal minister our view that we have to move in this direction. All of them agreed, of course, that it would be desirable to move on a national basis so that we would have some continuity across this country.

The member would know that the federal government has pre-eminence in this particular field. It too, I must say, as I discussed with the minister, has indicated it wishes to move in that direction. I think we would have the support of some of the other provinces for what he has indicated.

Certainly this is a direction in which I favour moving. It seems to me the member has even alluded to this before in the House. I think he raised this with the Minister of Energy (Mr Wong) at one time previous to this. I think it is the kind of direction in which we should be moving in this country. Anything and everything we can do to improve upon the emissions and to look at other jurisdictions to see what they have done to improve in certain environmental areas is worthy of exploring. I am glad the member raised it in the House today.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr Adams: My question is for the Minister of Colleges and Universities. Last session, I asked the minister about improving links between the colleges and the universities. I read recently that Durham College, Ryerson, York and Trent have signed some sort of transfer agreement. Can the minister provide us with the details of this?

Hon Mrs McLeod: When the member asked before about the relationships between colleges and universities and the linkages between them, I indicated to him that we were trying to encourage a closer relationship and more linkages so that there would be more flexibility for students. We had a conference last fall to bring the colleges and universities together to begin the dialogue and there have been a number of discussions between institutions since then.

I think this agreement between Durham and McMaster, Ryerson and Trent is unique. It may be a model of the kind of agreement we may see in the future. They are establishing a truly collaborative relationship and they are going to work out details on such issues as the transferability of credits with certain programs, co-ordinated support services and delivery of university programs in the Durham area.

Mr Adams: Does the minister think we can expect general agreements of this type as a result of the Vision 2000 review of the colleges?

Hon Mrs McLeod: Yes, I think it is entirely possible that we will see similar kinds of agreements, although I think the agreements that will be reached will be unique to the institutions that are building these kinds of relationships. Certainly, this is a focus of concern for our Vision 2000 review. They are looking at the relationship between colleges and universities and they may well bring forward recommendations in this area, but I do think we will see future agreements that are arrived at between individual institutions.

HOME CARE

Ms Bryden: I have a question for the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs. I am very disappointed that in the throne speech of last Tuesday, the Liberal government demoted the million or more senior citizens in this province to the no-mention list for its second throne speech.

In light of Liberal election promises and the promises made by the Liberal Party in the Liberal-New Democratic Party accord in 1985 to help seniors live independently in their own homes as long as possible, when is the government going to remove the freeze imposed last September on the expansion of homemaker programs and live up to its original promises made in 1985 and 1987 to "place a high priority on implementing homemaker and home support programs"?

Hon Mrs Wilson: The reform agenda that has been discussed in the speech from the throne of course presents a better future for all Ontarians including senior citizens of this province. There are two particular areas of that outlined which are important to older people in Ontario.

The first of these is the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Certainly, seniors across the province tell me very clearly that there is no point in adding years to life unless we can add life to years. Seniors are beginning to take more personal responsibility for their own health, and we are bringing that about through health promotion grants and through the encouragement of research and funding of programs for seniors in their local communities, which will assist them in health promotion and learning to live very healthy lifestyles.

The other area that is of particular importance to seniors has to do with safe and secure communities. These are issues that are of importance as we grow older. If I might address specifically the homemaker issue, this is an issue we have discussed in the House over the last number of months. The Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr Sweeney), who has the lead responsibility for that program, is undertaking a review of the program. It includes the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) as well as myself. It is a program that is important to seniors in the province, and as the member says, contributes to their being able to maintain a lifestyle in the community.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Ms Bryden: How can seniors maintain a healthy lifestyle if they cannot get the support services they need to be able to live in their own

homes? Is the minister aware that most agencies that provide homemaker services find it almost impossible to recruit staff because of no additional funding to make the necessary wage increases in today's competitive market, and that as a result many seniors are being forced into institutions and our over crowded hospitals? Will the minister break the logjam in homemaker services funding and expansion?

1500

Hon Mrs Wilson: The Minister of Community and Social Services addressed the issue of deficits in homemaking programs in the province back last January. He has also been able, through that program, to enable those homemaking agencies to continue with their service to seniors and disabled people in the province. Through an operational review, he will be able to determine where exactly their problems lie.

I must say the homemaking issue is a very complex one. We need to look at the issues of wages, training, status and recruitment. It is one that is much more complex than just saying a few extra dollars will assist. In fact, this government has tripled the number of dollars that are going into homemaker programs in this province in the last number of years. It is a good beginning. There is more to be done and we intend to do just that.

CHILD CARE

Mrs Cunningham: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. There seems to be a great deal of confusion in the government today with regard to the funding of child care and/or junior kindergarten. We were surprised to read in the Toronto Star that the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) of Ontario believes "that the cuts in day care commitment will hurt the financing of junior and senior kindergartens." What child care dollars was he planning to use to expand the junior kindergarten programs?

Hon Mr Sweeney: Let me make it very clear that the budget that has been allocated for child care over the current three-year cycle is fully and completely protected. The commitments I made two years ago, and I am now into the third year of the cycle, are commitments that not only have been kept, but in fact have been exceeded, and will also be this year.

I am saying the commitments this government has made will be kept. If another government cannot keep its commitment, that is its problem.

Mrs Cunningham: Since many people in the province really want to know what is happening in child care in this province, one should know

that there never was a commitment to the new child care act; therefore, it is a different kind of funding. One should also recognize that the program has been put on hold.

I am very happy to hear the minister is protecting the commitment he made, along with the federal government, to Ontario. My real concern is the total lack of understanding around budgets and the total lack of planning.

When the Premier (Mr Peterson) answers a question about funding kindergarten classes with a response like, "We are committed to child care for four- and five-year-olds," it clearly tells this province that this government does not know how to fund child care and how to fund education.

I am asking the minister now, what—

The Speaker: Order. You had lots of opportunity. Are you aware of her concern?

Hon Mr Sweeney: I think I understand the member's concern. Again, if I can make a point clear. The decision to provide more junior kindergarten opportunities in this province for four-year-olds and the families of four-year-olds was just that: an expanded opportunity for families to make that choice if that is what they want to do. The member will clearly understand that the announcement in the throne speech said that it will be incumbent upon school boards to provide the service. It will obviously not be incumbent upon parents to make use of that service.

The corollary to that surely is that if some parents are now using day care services for their four-year-olds and they switch those four-year-olds to junior kindergarten, then there will be an impact on day care. But clearly, the intent of the junior kindergarten enhancement was not to be a substitute for day care, but simply to provide parents with the option. "Do you want to send your four-year-old to day care? Do you want to send your four-year-old to junior kindergarten? That is your choice as a parent." That is the purpose of this government's program.

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION

Mr Owen: I have a question for the Treasurer. During our all-too-brief recess, a number of us in our ridings heard from teachers concerning their pensions. One of the complaints they gave to me was that part of the money in the pensions has been their contribution. They have their money there. It is their future. They continually say to us that they feel they have not been involved in the process of investing these moneys.

I understand that at the present time we are reimbursing or paying back, by way of investment, in excess of 11 per cent, but they tell me there have been times when the return has not been as generous.

The Speaker: Your question.

Mr Owen: I would ask if the Treasurer would share with us what involvement the teachers have had in their pensions thus far.

Hon R. F. Nixon: I think the honourable members—certainly the ones who have been teachers in their past—would know the teachers have representation on the Teachers' Superannuation Commission, but also on the boards that look after the decisions associated with this.

I was thinking of the honourable member's reference to 11 per cent. The last order in council borrowed, if that is the right word, about \$600 million from the teachers and the interest payable was 11.03 per cent. I can certainly recall a time when I was a member of the Legislature when the interest rates were much lower, but so were general interest rates. At that time it was a fixed rate. It is now established by a formula that the teachers and everyone else consider to be quite fair and adequate.

However, specifically on the member's question, it is correct that as Treasurer I could borrow on the open market for the needs of the province more cheaply than I borrow from the teachers' pension funds. The honourable members would know that the present statute requires that all of those resources be transferred to the Treasury because the Treasurer has the full responsibility of trusteeship in that regard.

I can see the Speaker is getting restive. Perhaps I should sit down while the honourable member gives me a supplementary.

Mr Owen: I realize the sums involved in these pensions are huge and therefore carry with them an awesome responsibility on investing, but I am wondering if the Treasurer could share with us whether there is any way in which we could, in the future, address these complaints we have had or these worries that have been expressed to us. Can we offer, in any way, more involvement, some more responsibility on their part to make them feel that this is part of what they are doing, and that it is not being done to them but is being done with them?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I think the best way to deal with our constituents, teachers who are unhappy with the situation, is to apprise them of the fact that the main proposal is for a full partnership and joint trusteeship. I am not prepared, however, to

make that subject to binding arbitration, since the funds involved are about \$20 billion. I am not, as Treasurer, going to turn that over to a decision of a third party that is not responsible to the teachers or to the taxpayers. I would be very glad to hear honourable members who have a different view.

The best arrangement is for this full partnership with joint trusteeship, and we would share that completely. The alternative, which also must be considered, is turning the fund over entirely to the teachers. I have told them from the start that this will be part of the legislation they can opt for whenever they choose.

NIAGARA COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

Mr Kormos: This is a question to the Minister of Colleges and Universities. On 4 April of this year, Niagara College announced it was forced to cancel its theatre arts program, leaving 25 first-year students hanging out to dry because there will be no more program in which to complete their studies. There are already over 100 applications from students across Canada for this first year that now will not take place in September. The program is highly successful. It is a vital part of the Niagara region.

There is more. The dental hygiene program remains suspended because of lack of funding from the ministry. It is a job area where there is high demand and 100 per cent placement of graduates. Now young people from Niagara are forced into the United States to pay incredible tuition in US dollars because their community college system has abandoned them, quite frankly because the ministry will not fund the program.

The Speaker: Do you have a question?

Mr Kormos: The question is, what is the minister going to do to ensure the theatre arts program and the dental hygiene program are maintained at this community college, so that young people in that region can obtain an education and pursue careers of their choice?

Hon Mrs McLeod: The honourable member actually asks a number of questions, which I will attempt to address as quickly as I can.

First of all, I indicate that we do not fund individual programs with any of our colleges. We provide transfer payments to the colleges and the board of governors in each college determines what programs it feels it will offer to the students in that particular college community.

1510

Second, in relation to the theatre arts program, that program was in some difficulty last year. An

offer was made by the Shaw Festival to provide a facility. The ministry provided funding for use of that facility. That has not worked out. The college was asked to find another site. They have decided instead that they are not able to offer that particular program. The decisions that the Niagara College board of governors makes are decisions made by that board of governors. They have been coping with some financial difficulties because of declining enrolment. That enrolment is beginning to increase and the future funding will reflect that.

PETITIONS

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION

Mr Adams: I have a petition from 120 superannuated teachers of Ontario. It is addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that all teachers who retired prior to 31 May 1982 have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than at the present seven or 10 years.

"This proposed amendment would make the five-year criterion applicable to all retired teachers and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

WASTE DISPOSAL

Mr Adams: I have another petition, and this one is from the issues of concern committee of the Ontario Association of Superannuated Women Teachers and is signed by 15 people. It too is addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas there is an unresolved question in our city and county of waste disposal in apartment buildings;

"Whereas there is an unresolved question in our city and county of hazardous waste disposal;

"Therefore we urge fewer studies and more action be applied to these issues."

GAME FISH

Mr Adams: I have a petition with regard to size limits on fish. It is addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and so on.

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:.... We urge the Parliament of Ontario to legislate without

delay sensible minimum and maximum size limits on game fish in Ontario and especially the pickerel. All of which is hereby respectfully submitted."

RAIL SERVICES

Mr Adams: I have a petition from passengers using the Via Rail Toronto-Peterborough/Havelock route. This petition says:

We are concerned about the consequences of the federal budget on Via's Toronto-Peterborough/Havelock route.

"The possibility exists that the federal government may, once again, for the second time this decade, cut service to this route permanently. For many of us, our ability to commute to our jobs in Toronto will be jeopardized....

We "urge...that the Ontario government support the retention, modernization and expansion of this passenger rail route and...advise Prime Minister Mulroney and federal Transport Minister Bouchard of the provincial government's position on this very important matter."

INJURED WORKERS

Mr Adams: I have a petition from members of the Provincial Federation of Ontario Fire Fighters.

"We, the firefighters of Ontario, care about injured workers. We protest the Minister of Labour's proposal to change the law that would take away injured workers' rights rather than responding to the genuine needs of these workers and their widows. Workers who are killed or injured in the performance of their duties at work deserve much better treatment than this."

LOTTERY PROFITS

Mr Adams: My last petition is from 150 persons concerned about Bill 119.

"Cultural and recreational activities enrich the lives of everyone in Ontario through a very small investment of government funds, matched many times over by the input of time, energy and money of participants, supporters and volunteers. These employment-intensive activities maintain and improve the physical and mental health of those involved."

We urge the withdrawal or amendment of Bill 119.

The Speaker: Have you signed all the petitions?

Miss Martel: I am very pleased that the firefighters of Ontario have endorsed our position on Bill 162, but I do not have a petition about Bill 162 today.

The Speaker: The purpose is to present petitions, not discuss them.

Miss Martel: There will be more petitions on Bill 162.

FIREFIGHTING

Miss Martel: In any event, I have a petition addressed to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, want adequate fire protection for our community for the safety and protection of our families by qualified, professional firefighters. As well we want a current updated fire marshal's study conducted by qualified people who are experienced in determining the type of fire protection a community of this size needs."

This is signed by 3,254 people in the town of Valley East, and I agree with them entirely.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Consideration of the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Miss Fawcett moved, seconded by Mr Velshi, that an humble address be presented to his Honour the Lieutenant Governor, as follows:

To the Honourable Lincoln M. Alexander, a member of Her Majesty's Privy Council for Canada, Knight of Grace of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, one of Her Majesty's counsel learned in the law, bachelor of arts, doctor of laws, colonel in Her Majesty's armed forces supplementary reserve, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has addressed to us.

Mrs Fawcett: It is both an honour and a privilege for me to move adoption of the speech from the throne. It is all the more gratifying because it presents me with the opportunity to compliment the Lieutenant Governor on his excellent delivery of what I am sure is one of the shorter yet more focused provincial throne speeches in recent memory.

Indeed, many of the elements of this throne speech are emulated by His Honour. The theme of building a better future for our children with our children is one the Lieutenant Governor, who is associated with many child-oriented groups

and who is the honorary patron of the Boy Scouts of Canada, can appreciate.

His Honour has personally brought to the office of the Lieutenant Governor the compassion, the openness and the genuine affection for all of us for which he is noted in all communities throughout Ontario. For these and many other fine qualities, I salute him today.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to take this opportunity to commend you for the even-handed manner in which you have directed the proceedings of this House. I am sure all members will agree you have earned our respect for the firmness and fairness you display daily.

1520

When I was first elected to this Legislature to represent the riding of Northumberland, I had a strong vision of what we Liberals stand for and what we would accomplish as a majority government. I am happy to say that I have not been disappointed. Indeed, I am quite proud of what we in this House have been able to accomplish with this massive majority. We have not forgotten the reason this government was the overwhelming choice of the people.

What has made this government strong is our ability to constantly remember that the rights of the individual come first. It has always been this government's goal to provide an economic and social climate where the individual may flourish and not be smothered by government. We want a society in which the individual has incentive and dignity. The tolerance that we must display towards the individuals in society is what will keep us strong, for we realize that we all hold a stake in this great province and each and every one of us profits or suffers when our province profits or suffers.

This government realizes that society is composed of many different groups and individuals and that we are all members of our provincial community, and although all our needs are individual, we have been able to address the rights of the individual within the framework of provincial policies and programs for all.

These are the goals that our government set out to work towards when we received our mandate in September 1987. Since then, we have worked with determination to achieve these reforms, reforms that were long overdue.

Our riding of Northumberland would be the first to attest to this government's commitment to provide an economic and social climate that serves us all. Indeed, after over 40 years of Tory neglect, Northumberland county has come to life. Each and every municipality throughout our

county has witnessed our government's assistance in the maintenance of the quality of life throughout Northumberland.

You just have to drive from Hope township, the western boundary of Northumberland, along the lakeshore to Murray township and you will evidence the Liberal government's commitment to a clean and healthy Ontario, to excellence in educational training, to a caring society and to a strong and competitive economy.

We have seen many changes over these past 18 months. On the economic outlook, Ontario is entering its sixth year of economic growth. Real growth is 3.7 per cent. Employment has increased at a record pace. It is higher than in 1988 and more than 180,000 jobs were created. Inflation has been moderate. In short, in economic output and employment, this province is experiencing higher growth than any major industrial country.

In our riding of Northumberland, we have seen the establishment of several new manufacturing facilities and the expansion of existing ones. I was elated when Viceroy Homes decided to locate in the town of Port Hope's industrial park. In fact, now Port Hope's industrial park is full and the town is looking towards expansion. Similarly, the town of Brighton was happy to welcome Williams Paper Co. The town of Campbellford welcomed Moysing, and Ferranti-Packard located in Cobourg. And not to forget our agrifood industry, MCM Food Processors is now well established in Hope township.

Most of these companies reached out to the Ontario government for assistance and, I am proud to say, were able to receive it.

On the educational front, we have already witnessed how the Peterson government mounted a vigorous attack on the backlog of school accommodation needs in Ontario. Just last week we witnessed an increase in funding that brings our funding on school capital to nearly eight times the level of annual spending in 1984. This is the largest school-building boom in Canadian history and one of the greatest construction undertakings in Ontario since the Second World War.

Millions are being spent to reduce class size in grades 1 and 2, provide textbooks, put more computers in our schools and improve science education.

I was also pleased to see our Ministry of Skills Development provide the extra \$5 million needed to make up for the federal government's shortfall in funding apprenticeship programs in Ontario.

In Northumberland I took great pleasure in participating at the ground-breaking ceremony for the Plainville Public School's addition and renovation. In Campbellford, they have almost reached the completion of the new addition to the Campbellford District High School. Just last week, I had the privilege of announcing a new school to be built in the town of Cobourg, one of our growth areas, and the much needed renovation and additions to the school in the village of Baltimore. Yes, in Northumberland we have witnessed the Peterson government's commitment to education.

On the environment, last season we saw Ontario become the first province in Canada to act to protect the stratospheric ozone layer by phasing out the use of chlorofluorocarbons, Halons and other ozone-depleting substances. I am sure most members in this House noticed how the federal government followed our lead. Our government has been hailed internationally for its commitment to clean up the environment.

Money is being spent to clean up our beaches.

We have increased our funding for recycling 10-fold since 1985 and established new targets for province-wide recycling programs. The feeding of the blue box is now a daily routine in many homes throughout our province.

Countdown Acid Rain has achieved major reductions in sulphur dioxide emissions.

In my riding, the towns of Port Hope, Cobourg and Brighton are participating in the LifeLines infrastructure renewal program, which is designed to ultimately improve water quality and clean up our beaches.

On caring for society, we have provided substantial increases in benefits for social assistance programs.

Better access to transportation for the disabled has been established.

We have announced substantial increases in funding for provincially subsidized child care spaces.

We covered the deficit for the Red Cross homemakers and have committed ourselves to cover the 1989-90 deficit of the not-for-profit homemaker services.

Our government has been generous to not only those in Northumberland who receive benefits but to those who deliver the services.

Cook's School Child Care Centre and the Ganaraska Child Care Centre have both been able to expand with the help of our government. Indeed, two new facilities will be established in our riding, the Sunshine Heights Day Care

Centre in Port Hope and the Cobourg Day Care Centre.

Our riding has also benefited from many other government initiatives such as the first nonprofit housing facility in Port Hope; 21 seniors' apartments were established in the village of Warkworth; the many individuals and associations who have participated through government programs to help us realize our cultural identity. I would be remiss if I did not mention the assistance we have received in establishing Northumberland county as a tourist destination.

1530

The large rural component of my riding was more than pleased with the way this government has addressed its concerns through forward-looking legislation and programs. In the last session, we took steps to protect the persons engaged in agricultural operations from claims for a nuisance in respect to odour, noise or dust resulting from those operations if they are normal farm practices. We provided a formal process for the resolution of problems encountered in the sale, service, maintenance, safety and warranty of farm implements.

On a farm in Hope township, which once relied heavily on the tobacco industry, MCM Food Processors has converted much of its acreage to produce vegetables which now supply its new processing plant, setting an example for many in our rural communities of what can be done when innovative ideas meet with a co-operative government.

Before being elected to the Ontario Legislature, I served as a Northumberland county councillor, where I soon realized the importance of county government. Being able to participate on the consultation committee on county government which served as a functioning arm of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs was a most worthwhile experience. I firmly believe that we politicians must take every opportunity to get out of these four walls and listen to the reactions from our communities.

The consultation meetings were held between 25 May and 27 July 1988 in each of Ontario's 26 counties. At these meetings, members of the consultation committee talked with representatives of the councils of counties, local municipalities and separated municipalities, as well as with interested associations and individuals.

During these meetings, the committee discussed issues of representation and the functions and status of small and separated municipalities with almost 800 people. In addition, the committee received more than 120 written briefs. As a

result of this process, the committee developed 41 recommendations with an aim to strengthen the system of county government.

In making its recommendations, the committee stressed: "We recognize the importance of the county as a distinct unit of local government. The objectives of the recommendations in this report are to make counties more representative, effective, responsible and adaptable to future needs."

The face of Ontario has changed significantly since the introduction of county government through the Baldwin Act of 1849. While substantial alterations have been made to the structure and functions of other local governments in Ontario since that time, the county system remains much the same today as it was 140 years ago.

Ontario in the 20th century has experienced many changes and will continue to be shaped in the 21st century by changes in settlement and commuter patterns, in the nature of traditional rural areas, in the mix of people living in counties and in the expectations which residents have of their local government.

These changes have placed new requirements and demands on a government system designed for a primarily agricultural society. The county form of government must remain specially suited to the communities which combine urban and rural interests, traditional stable economies and new growth areas.

The goal behind the recommendations in this report is to strengthen county government in Ontario by ensuring that a system is fair, both in terms of representation and in providing services. To achieve this, the county and the local municipal governments must be strong partners.

Speaking of strong partners, we have witnessed the bond between Northumberland county council and our government. With the assistance of the eastern Ontario community economic development program, Northumberland county is now able to prepare its long-term economic development plan. This is an investment in the future of our county and will lead to economic spinoffs for local industries and entrepreneurs. It will enable us to find efficient ways of matching available resources with sectors which show growth potential.

In the fall of 1987, the county was fortunate enough to construct a new children's aid society building. This much-needed facility will go a long way in our ability to care for those in need.

In keeping with our government's primary goal in waste management to reduce the amount

of waste generated and to reuse, recycle and recover the waste which is produced, Northumberland county's resource recovery study, which was part of the county's waste management master plan, was given generous support from the Peterson government.

While we have made a great investment in Northumberland and indeed throughout Ontario, I must point out that all these initiatives have been accomplished while our government has remained fiscally responsible. In fact, under the member for Brant-Haldimand (Mr R. F. Nixon), perhaps the greatest Treasurer this province has ever seen, the planned net cash requirements of last year's budget have dropped to \$271 million, the lowest level in over 15 years.

Perhaps now the members can see why I am so proud of the Peterson government's accomplishments over the past 18 months, for we in Northumberland have truly been recognized as the gateway to eastern Ontario. We are witnessing growth and expansion in our county unparalleled in this century, and the future could not look brighter.

Now, I would like to look into that future. The 1989 speech from the throne represents the agenda for the Peterson government. The Peterson government continues to provide the type of social and economic leadership that meets the needs of Ontarians today while building confidently for the exciting challenges of the future.

It has not been the intention of this government to push all the buttons and pull all the levers for the sake of appearance. This throne speech outlines a direct approach to province-wide issues. It establishes our priorities and sets forth our long-term direction that will allow us to achieve our objectives in this legislative session.

If I could just pause for a moment, I would remind the members of what the interim leader for the third party said when he moved the adoption of the throne speech on 19 April 1983. After what we have experienced over the past 18 months, I am sure the members will agree that his statement more aptly applies today:

"I have never fallen into the depths of despair and timidity that appear to be the natural habitats of many of the members opposite. Their unshakeable conviction that the sky over Ontario is falling is really exaggeration in the extreme. The gloom which emanates from that part of the House is nearly impenetrable. The entire area over there reminds me of a large black cloud that is constantly hovering above their heads."

I think we have heard those words before. As they say in Northumberland, "If the shoe fits, wear it."

But our priorities are clear: building on our economic strength to ensure tomorrow's growth; investing in the future of our children by making our education system a more effective springboard to opportunity; reforming social assistance to help people move from dependence to self-reliance; keeping our communities and neighbourhoods safe and secure; promoting healthy lifestyles and preserving quality health care, and providing leadership in environmental protection.

1540

With this agenda, we embark on a legislative session that will be as productive as the last. It is a session that will address one of the foremost concerns of this government: building a better future for our children. It is in the eyes of our children that we see the future for Ontario.

For our children to realize their full potential, society must meet their basic needs of adequate food, clothing and shelter. They must grow up living healthy lifestyles in communities free of the fear of crime, free of physical abuse and free of the tyranny of drug and alcohol abuse.

We must provide our children with the basic knowledge and learning skills needed to seize the opportunities offered by the very different world of the 21st century. Ontario stands at the forefront of a strong global economy. We have outpaced the industrialized world in economic expansion since 1982, growing by 41 per cent and creating 800,000 new jobs in the process.

A dynamic, growing economy preserves and enhances our quality of life. We cannot take the present growth for granted. We must continue to provide the leadership to build on our economic strengths and ensure tomorrow's growth.

During the last session, we broke new economic ground on this continent through initiatives created and supported by the Premier's Council on technology. Through this unique economic body, we encouraged advanced research and development through the centres of excellence and the industry research program. We introduced the research and development super allowance in the last budget and fostered an entrepreneurial spirit through the establishment of six centres of entrepreneurship throughout Ontario.

The Premier's Council presented a blueprint for competing in the international marketplace, and we are building on its work by aggressively pursuing new markets for our goods and services; targeting support to industries that provide maximum benefits for both workers and the economy; supporting the growth of Ontario-

based companies as they compete in the global economy; fostering an entrepreneurial culture that promotes the growth of new businesses; supporting apprenticeship and other training arrangements that combine education and on-the-job training; helping our workers to overcome barriers to training and employment; assisting the re-employment efforts of workers, particularly workers affected by layoffs and plant closures, and addressing present and anticipated shortages of skilled workers.

Our economy must remain strong so that our children are not denied the opportunities that have always been available in Ontario. But they have to have the necessary skills to seize the opportunities that are in store for the future. Education is that springboard to opportunity. The long-term direction for this government is to create a purposeful and relevant education system, key to realizing the economic potential of our province and the individual potential of our people.

From their foundation years in junior and senior kindergarten to the specialization years of grades 10 to 12, this government is determined to improve the quality of education by instilling a sense of excellence.

Our elementary schools must assist our children to develop basic learning and social skills in their earlier years. They must build on that foundation by setting high standards for achieving in subsequent years. Our secondary schools must give our students a chance to acquire advanced knowledge and provide them with bridges to post-secondary education and the world of work.

We are committed to providing parents with an opportunity to place their children into a stimulating learning environment at an early age by ensuring that all school boards offering half-day kindergarten for four-year-olds as well as half-day senior kindergarten for five-year-olds becomes a reality and by providing funding for school boards to offer full-day senior kindergarten programs where classroom space permits.

As they move through the school system, we will provide students with an opportunity to develop a wider range of learning and life skills by revitalizing the curriculum from grades 1 to 6, by focusing on the development of literacy, analytical and communications skills and by placing a greater emphasis on assessing student performance and providing remedial help.

We recognize that grades 7 to 9 are critical years for helping students make the transition from elementary school to the more advanced

and specialized studies in secondary school, but we are concerned that we are requiring students to make career choices at an age when they have not yet discovered their full academic potential.

In the upcoming legislative session, we will address this issue by ensuring a core curriculum in grades 7, 8 and 9 that emphasizes the development of basic skills and progressive problem-solving and by eliminating streaming in grade 9.

When our students reach those specialization years of grades 10 through 12, they must know that they are moving through a system that will assist them to make informed career choices and that is capable of addressing the broader economic needs of Ontario for a highly skilled workforce.

To help our secondary schools deliver programs that will build on the foundation of acquired learning skills, we will develop the final years of secondary school as years of specialization and redesign technological education through updating and consolidating curriculum as well as renewal of teaching equipment. This undertaking will be in partnership with business, labour and communities, thereby drawing on the model this government established with the Premier's Council.

Our commitment to reform of our educational system is matched by our commitment to Ontario's social assistance. In 1988-89, Ontario provided \$2 billion for social assistance. That is an increase of more than 60 per cent since 1984-85, yet the number of people needing social assistance continues to grow.

How can we fully enjoy the prosperity of this wealthy province when we know that there are single mothers out there who must rely upon the generosity of others to help provide for their children? One only has to spend a few hours in a food bank to realize this fact.

Where is the humanity in a system where children will be unable to reap the benefits of excellence in education because they are caught up in the tragedy of poverty? It is so difficult to be highly motivated to learning when one is undernourished, improperly clothed or lacking in self-esteem.

Poverty is often the lead domino in a chain of problems that encompasses poor health, a shorter life and lower educational achievement. As a caring society, we cannot turn our back on this tremendous loss of individual potential. Our goal is to have as many Ontarians as possible reach their potential without the difficulties that I have just mentioned.

This session, we are going to attack the issue through continued reform. We must continue to meet the needs of those who are unable to be self-sufficient. But the opportunity must exist, for those capable of becoming self-reliant, to move into the mainstream of society by transforming those welfare cheques into paycheques.

1550

In this session, our reforms to the social assistance system will include increased payments for shelter support to persons on social assistance; removal of barriers that serve as disincentives to work; expansion of the network of employment counselling, referral, basic training and job preparation programs; and increased children's benefits.

We have the wealth and the creativity to prevent the unfortunate hardships imposed by an economically divided society. Progress in this area will require the financial support and co-operation of all levels of government and the community at large. I am confident, however, that together we can reason and we can meet this challenge.

I am also confident that we are going to meet a second social challenge critical to our province's future wellbeing and development. I refer to the challenge of maintaining a sense of safety and security in our communities. We remain concerned about the recent adverse effects on the quality of life in our communities caused by drug and alcohol abuse, racial tension and incidents of violence. There are not many families today that have not evidenced, in some way, one or more of these scourges.

Last session, we appointed the Task Force on Illegal Drug Use in Ontario and we quickly responded to several of its prime recommendations. We have announced a mandatory drug education program from grades 4 through 10 in Ontario schools, and we increased funding for community-based drug and alcohol addiction programs.

This session, we remain committed to building on our comprehensive antidrug strategy through education and prevention programs, including antidrug education in primary and secondary schools and community-based programs in high-risk neighbourhoods; a wider range of treatment programs, including employee assistance programs; expansion of Ontario's drug enforcement capacity, including a strengthened Ontario Provincial Police drug enforcement unit.

We will couple this strategy with other measures aimed at protecting the quality of life in Ontario communities: expanding our efforts to

prevent violence against women and children; providing enhanced race relations training to better equip police to respond to the diverse needs of the community they serve; working with the OPP and all municipal police forces to promote racial equality in employment; urging the federal government to effect immediate changes to the Young Offenders Act; reforming our court system to provide improved access to justice.

In 1987, the Peterson government established the Premier's Council on Health Strategy. Modelled after its successful technological counterpart, the council represents a partnership among business, labour, government, universities, health care professionals and consumers to provide advice on how to better meet our future health needs.

The council is in line with our commitment to the principle of every person's being entitled to have access to quality health care, regardless of ability to pay. It has also provided us with a broader vision of health care. Working in the framework of this vision, the government will shift the emphasis from treatment after the fact to health promotion and disease prevention; foster strong and supportive families and communities; ensure a safe and high-quality physical environment; increase the number of years of good health for Ontarians by reducing illness, disability and premature death; provide accessible, affordable, appropriate health services for all; address specialty care needs in areas such as emergency services, cancer care, cardiovascular services, dialysis, trauma, acquired immune deficiency syndrome and maternal and infant care.

Our final priority addressed in the speech from the throne is the environment. Our approach to protecting our environment is a strong and forceful one. Our record in the last legislative session is one of successful international leadership.

We have been successful in reducing acid-rain-causing sulphur dioxide emissions through the Countdown Acid Rain program. We are national and international leaders in banning chlorofluorocarbons to protect our ozone layer. We have increased funding and established new targets for the province-wide recycling programs, implemented the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement to ensure cleaner and safer waterways, and created the Ontario Round Table on Environment and Economy to encourage sustainable development.

This session, we will do even more by requiring that vapours produced by automobile fuels be reduced, by bringing in strict control standards to cut automobile-produced acid rain emissions by one third by the year 2000, and by introducing a comprehensive Ontario waste reduction strategy designed to meet the target of reducing the province's solid waste by 50 per cent by the year 2000.

We will stimulate the development of pollution abatement technologies, create Cleantario, a new lottery fund to help finance our ongoing efforts to protect our environment, encourage more efficient water use and conservation by both industries and individuals, and implement educational programs to help students develop a greater sense of personal responsibility for environmental protection.

I am very proud to say that in Northumberland, a group of students at the Campbellford District High School have formed an organization that is dedicated to environmental issues.

The agenda we have unveiled for this session is based on the principle of equality of opportunity and is composed of the policies that will ensure its growth in our province.

When we first took office in 1985, the people of Ontario were looking for a government that was open, that was accessible, that was caring, that was compassionate. As evidenced in this throne speech, we have seen the results of a government that listens to its people, a government that cares for its people and a government that is willing to serve its people.

Unlike many of the previous governments, which have looked backwards for their principles, the David Peterson government looks forward for its principles. We have no fear of change. We are here to protect and enhance the interests of the many above those of any particular group and to maximize opportunity for everyone, the opportunity to realize his or her potential.

The Premier (Mr Peterson) has led this government by example. He realizes that when people act in freedom, free as far as possible from class or culture distinction and undue constraint, they may achieve not only self-fulfilment but the greatest public good. People in freedom are more prone to improve than to debauch themselves, more apt to perfect society and more likely to advance civilization.

Many governments in the past have recognized that our future lies with our youth. This government has not only realized this, but as evidenced by the throne speech, is acting on this.

Being a mother of three and having been a teacher, and now as a member of the provincial Parliament, I truly can relate and appreciate this government's agenda. I am sure my colleagues will agree when I say that this government does indeed have an agenda, that it does have a vision, and that we in these chambers will progressively pursue this agenda for the betterment of all Ontario.

1600

Mr Pouliot: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: With high respect, of course, I could not help but be taken by the emotion of the member for Northumberland. However, I would like, with respect, Mr Speaker, to draw to your attention—and to congratulate you on your patience which became virtuous at times—that the distinguished member contravened standing order 19(d)4, which reads as follows:

“4. In the opinion of the Speaker, refers at length to debates of the current session, or reads unnecessarily from verbatim reports of the legislative debates or any other document.”

The Deputy Speaker: Point of order overruled. Thank you for the point of humour.

Mr Velshi: I would like to just mention that whatever the member for Northumberland was saying was all original. They were busy talking across the aisle here and they probably did not understand what was going on.

It is a great honour for me to second the motion to adopt the speech from the throne. I would like to compliment His Honour the Lieutenant Governor on the delivery of his address, and I compliment you, sir, as you begin another session as the respected Speaker of this assembly.

Throne speeches have often been categorized by the media as a meaningless exercise lacking depth and legislative value, as these two quotes would indicate. Press quotes from some Toronto papers ran articles under headlines like “Throne Speech Recycled” and “Blueprint Is Silent on Important Issues.”

I can say with full confidence that the speech from the throne, as a document setting the priorities of a governing body, is anything but meaningless. The custom of a government announcing its legislative agenda prior to the opening of each new session of Parliament stands at the very core of our practised democracy.

I want to congratulate my colleague the member for Northumberland for the enlightening and thought-provoking comments she made relating to her riding in the throne speech. I, too, would like to spend a few moments to

point out some of the interesting characteristics of my riding of Don Mills.

Don Mills is a completely urban riding composed of a balance of residential and rental housing, coupled with a strong business and manufacturing sector. The riding's geographic area is bordered on the south by Danforth Avenue, on the north by Lawrence Avenue, on the east by Victoria Park and on the west by Bayview.

I am very pleased to note that the riding of Don Mills had an active workforce in excess of 45,000 workers at the time of the last census. Some 72 languages and dialects exist in the area, while only approximately 20 languages predominate. Don Mills has a population of 72,050, based on the 1986 census. The immigrant population of the riding accounts for 32,620 of the inhabitants, while the remaining two fifths of my constituents come from a nonimmigrant background.

These statistics reflect the vast number of different cultures, religions and traditions that compose my riding constituency. I am very proud to represent this diverse group of people and their multitude of interests and beliefs, primarily because I believe this government is meeting the needs of my constituents.

As part of this government, I am also pleased to state my intentions: I will continue to strive to ensure that their voice is constantly heard here in Queen's Park.

On 28 December 1867, Lieutenant Governor Henry William Stisted read the first speech from the throne to open the first session of the Parliament of the new province of Ontario. The speech was brief and reflected the two priorities of Premier John Sandfield Macdonald's government—the occupation of public lands and the “expediency of encouraging immigration”—to the 82 members of the Legislative Assembly.

The act of government in 1989 is somewhat more complex than its historical counterpart 132 years ago, but the most important commitment to serve remains, and a responsible government is one that has the commitment to live up to the agenda that it sets.

One of the items on that agenda at the outset was a commitment to racial equality. It is interesting to note that our predecessors in this place were successful in “encouraging immigration,” as they had called for in that first throne speech. So successful were they that today Ontario can boast one of the most widely diversified societies anywhere.

In response to this government's desire to foster and improve the advocacy of human rights and improve race relations, campaign promises evolved into fulfilled commitments through the creation of the Ministry of Citizenship on 29 September 1987.

In my role as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Citizenship (Mr Phillips), I am actively involved in helping to see that this widely diverse society we call Ontario is a place for all persons to grow and prosper. Therefore, I would like to begin my comments with my own ministry and dwell at some length on it before moving on to other items referred to in the throne speech.

Some Ontarians may be asking why a provincial government established a ministry in what is traditionally considered an area of federal responsibility. The decision to create a provincial Ministry of Citizenship was based on this government's commitment to address the needs of the people of Ontario. In order to understand this commitment to the establishment of a new ministry, it is necessary to recognize and understand the changing demographic profile of our population.

Since the Second World War, Ontario society has been transformed by two major waves of immigration. The first, soon after the war, originated mainly from the United Kingdom and Europe. The second began in the 1970s and continues today. But the pattern has changed. Now three out of four immigrants arrive from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Due to this tremendous influx of newcomers, three out of 10 Ontario residents today are of non-British or non-French origin. Demographic projections indicate that Ontario's population will begin to decline around the turn of the century unless there is a sharp increase in the birth rate or substantial immigration. Since most immigration will continue to follow current trends and originate from Third World countries, Ontario society will likely become more culturally diverse. As Ontario becomes more diverse, the challenges associated with managing its multicultural groups will increase.

With these enormous challenges in mind, the government set out to create a ministry that would be capable of dealing with the changing needs of this province. In order to appropriately address the needs of more than 100 distinct cultural and religious groups, the Premier created the Ministry of Citizenship.

Within the mandate of the ministry, the Premier consolidated the recently established

race relations directorate and responsibility for the Ontario Human Rights Commission with the native community branch, the citizenship development branch and the multiculturalism program division of the former Ministry of Citizenship and Culture. This consolidation demonstrates this government's continual commitment to improving racial harmony, equity and the enrichment of our society as a diverse ethnic community.

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How, you might ask, can the development of a new ministry demonstrate a government's commitment to the people of this province? Simply, one ministry, under the direction of one minister, is better suited to identify and address the multicultural needs of both the public and private sectors than that of a shared responsibility in which conflicting demands and biases could prevail. As a single ministry, the staff at the Ministry of Citizenship can focus all their efforts towards attaining the goal of a truly harmonious multicultural society.

Through the creation of a separate Ministry of Citizenship, the government has enabled the province to better promote equality, participation and full citizenship by recognizing changing values and trends and providing a sharper focus on today's crucial equity issues. As part of this government's continued commitment to the people of Ontario, the Ministry of Citizenship was established to ensure that everyone contributes and everyone benefits from Ontario's richness and potential.

Through the mandate set by our Premier, we in the Ministry of Citizenship have a special commitment not only to those who immigrated to Ontario, but also to our aboriginal peoples. We have a special commitment to assisting native communities in their efforts to develop self-reliance and a strong economic base. These are the important first steps towards achieving their goal of self-government. Most important, we in the Ministry of Citizenship are committed to redeveloping self-esteem through proactive efforts and the fostering of economic self-development.

The initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Citizenship over the past year reflect a profound change in the relationship between the government and the people. Now ministries like Citizenship are reaching out to assist the people, where before the people had to reach out and appeal for assistance from the government.

As of January 1989, 26 ministries had initiated 76 projects, such as the Ministry of Health's

multicultural district health centres, the Ministry of Education's heritage languages program, the Solicitor General's Race Relations and Policing Task Force and the Ministry of Citizenship's race relations grant program, which are but a few of the many initiatives presently under way. These measures display the government's commitment to a broad thrust in multicultural and race relations policy.

The Ministry of Citizenship is the springboard from which many ministries gain the direction and momentum to establish their own proactive policies. The throne speech reflects this government's continuing desire to maintain its high level of commitment to furthering the goals of the Ministry of Citizenship through the initiatives of many ministries.

To maintain this high level of commitment, the Ministry of Citizenship will continue to create harmony out of diversity through a number of key initiatives. These include developments in the fields of multiculturalism, race relations, native communities, newcomer settlement, citizenship development and human rights.

Members of this House will recall that as part of the Ministry of Citizenship's new mandate, the government of Ontario announced Multiculturalism: A New Strategy for Ontario. The report, a comprehensive response to extensive consultations with various multicultural communities, helped this government develop a plan of action that addressed the identified needs of this province.

In response to that input, the government committed itself to the development of a strategy that is based on three key features: First, it supports three strong principles of equality, access and cultural retention and sharing; second, it applies to all ministries, rather than remaining the exclusive responsibility of one; third, the report emphasizes that multiculturalism embraces all cultural communities. This report reflected the beginning of a new strategy, one that acknowledges the diversity of Ontario and recognizes the necessity of a true long-term commitment.

The government listened to the people and embraced their recommendations. This resulted in the creation of a five-year plan that will guarantee the continuation of provincial programs and services. Tuesday's throne speech displayed this government's desire to maintain these programs and policies and to continue to utilize the Ministry of Citizenship as the catalyst to help other ministries plan and introduce their own multicultural strategies.

This strategy has been exceptionally successful in the past and I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few of the 76 initiatives that have been developed as part of our commitment.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services has developed bridging services to link individuals from diverse multicultural backgrounds to mainstream social services such as old-age homes with the use of interpreters and funding for multilingual staff.

The Ministry of Education has initiated heritage-language programs as a means to educate students and preserve cultural traditions and values. The Ministry of Education has also published a draft paper designed to improve ethnic representation to better reflect the new multicultural composition of our schools.

The Ministry of Health, as a part of its endeavours to deinstitutionalize health care, has approved grants for a number of multicultural community health centres, enabling members of various ethnic communities to receive consultations and treatment in their own language. The Ministry of Health has also announced plans for the creation of 600 new nursing home beds as part of its commitment to provide culturally sensitive care to the elderly.

These are but five of the 76 initiatives undertaken by this government to date. I have only touched on a few of the many valued contributions being made daily to further our goals of a more harmonious and integrated Ontario. Just as I have only touched on some of the initiatives under way, similarly this government is only beginning to implement policies and strategies as part of our diligent effort to address the needs of the province's multicultural community.

The throne speech is indicative of this government's philosophy of equality and equity. The maintenance of our commitments has always been, and always will remain, our foremost priority.

This government believes that the goals of the province cannot be achieved through short-term solutions, and as such, these strategies will succeed only through long-term planning, tenacious effort and honouring our pledges initiated in 1987. Development of the ethnocultural database for the compilation of ethnocultural data will assist government, community groups, schools and industry in planning for more integrated services in the future.

Another example of this government's dedication to improving and providing the best multi-

cultural services possible is the Ontario Advisory Council on Multiculturalism and Citizenship. The council, 60 members strong, reflects the regional perspectives and mirrors the cultural diversity of this province. The creation of the Ontario Advisory Council on Multiculturalism and Citizenship ensures that the ministry is constantly receiving feedback on the value of its programs and grants. The council also serves in an advisory capacity, promoting and advocating newly identified needs.

Based on the multicultural initiatives of the Ministry of Citizenship, I have come to the conclusion that the Ministry of Citizenship is meeting its goals, and I see no reason to assume that this government will not continue to meet them in the future.

Race relations is another important ministry initiative that reflects this government's commitment to the advocacy of equal rights for all minorities. Presently, visible minorities comprise over six per cent of Ontario's population and this number is expected to double by the year 2000. The Ministry of Citizenship and the provincial government are providing skilled mediators and educators to assist in the handling of racial incidents at the local level. The vital challenge that is being met here is to transfer this expertise to the community so that organizations will be empowered to resolve their own issues without outside intervention. Race relations training has also been a priority of this government because we believe that it is important that employers and employees learn to resolve their own racial disputes.

Training programs have been offered to municipal boards, school and university administrations and the private sector. The program has been successfully implemented in Toronto, Ottawa, York region, London and Windsor. The government of Ontario has begun to achieve tangible results and the government has pledged to see race relations training and guidance available throughout the province.

An excellent example of this government's commitment to pursuing better race relations occurred when the Solicitor General (Mrs Smith) ordered an inquiry into the shooting death of two black men by the police. These shootings brought about a great deal of unrest and drew substantial attention to the state of race relations in Ontario's largest city. The ensuing task force, chaired by Clare Lewis, produced a report which made 57 recommendations outlining the needs that must be addressed to resolve the current state of race relations.

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Some of the suggestions of the task force include a recommendation that if police forces fail to meet targets for minority hiring, then the matter would be referred to the Solicitor General and the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Furthermore, the task force recommended that racially prejudiced behaviour should be outlawed under the Ontario Police Act. It is also recommended that police forces implement outreach programs where numbers warrant and that forces have ethnic relations units, staffed by officers on a rotating schedule. As vacancies occur on the police commission, attempts should be made to acquire replacements from visible minorities. These are but a few of the many significant recommendations made by the task force relating to race relations.

This politically and socially delicate issue requires a high level of government commitment to ensure that all viewpoints and all rights of all groups are recognized and respected. This government will not shy away from that responsibility, and as in the past, will remain powerful advocates of the rights of all minorities.

We are constantly committed to the philosophy and practice of employment equity. This belief has been demonstrated through the implementation of the public service employment equity program to include four new target groups besides women. These include disabled persons, native peoples, francophones and racial minorities.

Employment equity is essential to overcoming the hidden barriers that hold back certain groups. By increasing the representation of target groups, the government hopes to set an example that the private sector will emulate. As indicated in the throne speech, the government will continue to uphold this mandate so as to provide services that will fill this important gap in employment equity and racial equality.

This government has also recognized that the many native communities of this province have a strong desire to achieve greater autonomy. In keeping with their quest, the Ministry of Citizenship has endeavoured to help develop programs and grants that will enable the native peoples to move closer to achieving their goals. As part of our commitment to the native peoples of this province, the Ministry of Citizenship supports native aspirations through a number of channels, including core funding.

In keeping with our commitment to the native people of this province, core funding was increased by 67 per cent last year to include the

financial stability of umbrella organizations that provide leadership and support services to the many communities they serve. Through grants, the ministry also helps native communities develop self-esteem by providing financial support for programs and projects that help build stronger economies, reinforce bonds and preserve their unique culture and way of life.

During 1987-88, 266 native community grants were made totalling \$9,282,000. Programs that were funded include the Walpole Island band's education conference, the Aboriginal Peoples' Alliance leadership workshops, the Thunder Bay Art Gallery, the Georgian Bay Native Friendship Centre and others.

Other programs for the native community include the northern native business internship program. This program, at a cost of \$2 million provided through the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and delivered by the Ministry of Citizenship, will provide 100 interns a year with the opportunity to participate in one-year internships with the private sector and then return to their communities and utilize their new skills.

Also, the Ministry of Health has provided funding for the Anishnabwe native community health centre, Anishnabwe Health Toronto, so that the particular needs of natives in downtown Toronto can be met more effectively and with greater sensitivity.

By strengthening the economic base and providing additional support services, the Ministry of Citizenship continually displays this government's devotion and desire to assist the native peoples of this province in their quest to achieve self-government. Although this funding is not a panacea for the native communities in Ontario, it is providing the necessary and vital foundation that will provide the platform on which their recovery depends.

The Ministry of Citizenship reflects a commitment by this government to protecting and advocating minority rights unequalled in Ontario's colourful history. By acting as the catalyst, the Ministry of Citizenship has become an invaluable tool in this government's effort to expand multicultural services through other ministry initiatives. Whether the program is operated through Health, Community and Social Services, Education or Northern Development, this government's commitment is steadfast.

A multicultural-multiracial society such as ours can enjoy strong advantages in a world that is fast becoming more competitive and interdependent. By nurturing racial harmony, Ontario

will be able to further utilize its rich multicultural resources and blossom into a stronger, more competitive, global-oriented society, a society where our children will be able to harvest the fruits of our labour.

But I am not here today solely to discuss the government's mandate and commitment to multicultural issues.

The government of Ontario also recognizes the great importance the people of Ontario attach to their health care system. Canada's spending on health care is greater than any other country's in the world with a national health care system, and Ontario's per capita spending ranks among the highest in the country. Health care in Ontario accounts for a full one third of the province's expenditures. In the last 10 years, the cost of health care has risen by an astonishing 63.4 per cent, while the provincial economy has grown by only 42.7 per cent. These figures reflect but a few of the many economic complexities which must be taken into account when budgeting for health care.

This is no easy feat, for how can we put a price on something as valuable as a human life? One simply cannot. Rather, we must focus our efforts on identifying the various demands put upon our health care system. In recent years, health care has been facing a number of significant and startling challenges. Rising costs, new demographic trends, improving technologies, new forms of care and high public expectations all affect the disbursement of the health-care dollar.

In the light of our government's commitment to maintaining the best health-care system in the world, the Ministry of Health is constantly preparing to adapt to these new trends and technologies, and to stretch our human and financial resources to the limit.

If the previous statistics did not put the immensity of the task into perspective, consider the following: The Ministry of Health supports 223 public hospitals, 17 private hospitals, 17 rehabilitation centres, 10 psychiatric hospitals and five university teaching centres, and funds more than 23,000 licensed nursing-home beds, more than 37,000 acute-care hospital beds, more than 14,000 chronic-care beds and rehabilitation hospital beds and 43 public health units.

This list is far from complete, as it does not include the medical staff or administration required to keep these beds available. However, it does give us a better idea of the challenges being faced. In all, \$12.6 billion were allocated to health care in the 1988-89 budget; that is approximately \$1.4 million being spent on behalf

of every man, woman and child in this province every hour of every day.

Recently, the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) held a news conference introducing the most recent health paper entitled *Deciding the Future of our Health Care*. The aim of this paper, and its succeeding reports, is to outline a strategy to maintain and improve the quality of health care in Ontario. Both the Premier and the Minister of Health have reiterated countless times this government's commitment to ensuring the fairest and most effective health care possible. This paper is indicative of their unabated efforts to seek out new ways to improve and increase the availability of services to the people of this province.

For too many years, past provincial governments had been satisfied with simply maintaining the provision of health services. However, this government is committed not only to the quality of the health care services being provided but also, more important, to the quality of health of those who utilize the health-care system. This government is proud to recognize that the health of the individual is most effectively managed by the individual. This new perspective is just part of the new philosophy of health in Ontario, based on a number of major health care reports submitted during the last few years.

In 1987, the Ontario government received three major health-care reports which provided a framework for the future direction of health care. They were the Ontario Health Review Panel, chaired by Dr. John Evans; the Panel on Health Goals, chaired by Dr. Robert Spasoff, and the minister's Advisory Group on Health Promotion, chaired by Steve Podborski. These reports outline an agenda for evolving a system that focuses on community-care alternatives, as well as health promotion and disease prevention.

As a direct result of these reports and based on this government's commitment to improving the health of Ontarians, the Premier's Council on Health Strategy was established. Its mandate continues to be to provide leadership and guidance to the entire government in achieving the goal of a healthier society. The Premier's Council recognized that health encompasses many social, economic, environmental and lifestyle factors and that health should be viewed as a resource for everyday living.

Based on the importance of this new vision of health, the Premier's Council on Health Strategy initiated a long-term plan of action and committed \$100 million to the health innovation fund to support and evaluate new and innovative ways of

providing more cost-effective health services and programs.

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As part of this new initiative and commitment the Ministry of Health was restructured last year, in order to expand its former role as an administrator, insurer, funder and claims payer as well as a leader in safeguarding the strengths of the existing system.

In order to enhance the role and responsibilities of the health care consumer, the Ministry of Health has endeavoured to make individuals more responsible for their own state of health, through making better lifestyle choices, preventing disease, being better informed about treatment and being aware of the costs of health care so as to use services more wisely.

In order to achieve these worthy goals, the ministry has developed health promotion programs such as the healthy lifestyles campaign, introduced health education classes and expanded the health promotion grants program which provides funding to community groups to develop health promotion projects such as antismoking campaigns.

Another equally important initiative which displays this government's devotion to improving the state of health care in Ontario is the strengthening of the community-based health care program. As part of this government's continuing commitment to meet the health care needs of the province and in response to pressures for change, the Ministry of Health has undertaken to develop improved co-ordination and integration of community, institutional and social services within a region or municipality.

The kind of network now being developed will represent and respond to specific local needs and improve accessibility of services through a better continuum of care. Many services traditionally provided in a hospital setting can now be performed more effectively at a lower cost and minimal inconvenience to the patient in a community setting. New technology has made it possible for many medical and surgical procedures to be performed in doctors' offices or in settings other than existing medical institutions.

Furthermore, the benefits of the community-based system include a greater accessibility of services which are more sensitive to the specific and unique needs of the patient. A greater amount of compassion in care and a closer proximity to home will invariably reduce the time of recovery and improve the wellbeing of the patient.

How, one might ask, can a ministry implement such radical changes in the provision of health care services? The Ministry of Health, in keeping with its mandate to reorient the ministry to community-based care, has developed seven models that will help make the transition as smooth and efficient as possible. These seven projects represent innovations in funding and service and, in some circumstances, both.

These include the creation of health service organizations to provide specific services to a defined geographic area, community health centres whose shared objectives will be to reduce a community's dependence on institutional care through an increased emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention and comprehensive health organizations which will deliver many services under the administration of a nonprofit community board.

Expansion of the home care services will allow many individuals to remain in the security of their own homes while still receiving quality professional health care. Presently, 38 such programs are being provided through the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Hospital in the Home, which is a program presently being explored, will increase the numbers of hospital staff who can monitor and treat patients in their own homes.

Finally, there is the Independent Health Facilities Act. This act will provide the government with legislation which will permit certain surgical procedures not presently available outside of hospitals to be performed in community-based health facilities.

The cost-effectiveness of these ventures and their beneficial value to the community are unquestionable. These community-oriented initiatives reflect this government's ongoing commitment to laying a foundation for health care which will support the people of Ontario well into the 21st century.

Although community-based health care initiatives have been the focus of much of the ministry's effort, those in the Ministry of Health have not neglected to address the needs of those who will continue to require institutional health care and specialty services.

Issues such as research on acquired immune deficiency syndrome, AIDS information campaigns and chronic care are constantly, thoroughly and effectively being managed through new policies and capital infusion. Heart care programs were stepped up by \$18 million in 1988 along with the development of a new central registry in Metro Toronto. Funding for lithotrip-

sy programs was also increased substantially in response to identified needs.

Furthermore, haemodialysis services have been increased, and in response to the Lowy inquiry recommendations, thalassemia and cystic fibrosis drug services are now fully subsidized. These are but a few of the many programs being expanded and revitalized to meet the needs of today's health care consumers.

It is important to note that the government of Ontario has never cut a hospital budget, even though the government is experiencing a period of fiscal restraint. This indicates to me the high value this government places on the provision of health care services to the Ontario public. One out of every three tax dollars goes to our health care system, up from one in every four only a decade ago.

This province is fulfilling its mandate and ongoing commitment to the people of Ontario through the management and administration of our health care system. We have a responsibility to the people of Ontario to maintain a system of health care based on effective, available and compassionate medical services.

In the light of conflicting demands and changing values, the Ministry of Health and this government have made tremendous progress in developing and setting higher standards on health care. These inroads are indicative of this government's commitment to make Ontario a more happy, healthy and prosperous place to live.

Another of our important commitments has been and will continue to be in the area of education. Ontario elementary and secondary schools will receive a total in excess of \$4.1 billion this year, which represents an increase of 6.1 per cent in operating funds for 1989.

Our initiatives, which were set out in the November 1987 throne speech, will this year receive \$145.8 million in funding in the 1989 grants for the second year of a three-year program. This includes \$80.9 million for the continuation of the reduction in class size in grades 1 and 2; \$27 million for the purchase of computer hardware and software; \$20.2 million for textbook purchases; \$12.5 million for the purchase of learning materials, and \$5.2 million in support of intermediate science programs.

These are major commitments and are indicative of the way in which this government will continue to put our children in a position to be strong and competitive on the world stage.

I believe that one of the most significant ways of achieving this is through our commitment to

increase the supply of classroom computers, apply them more effectively to specific classroom needs and provide more computer time for each child. Computer literacy for our children is extremely important in this world of instant communication, and our commitment to giving this advantage to our children will surely benefit both the children and Ontario. No other area could be more important to the future of this province than ensuring our children a good education.

Members will, I am sure, agree that the initiatives announced the day before yesterday will ensure a bright future for the children of this province as they make their way through the educational system, from the half-day junior kindergarten to be offered by all school boards through to grades 10 to 12 being designated as years of specialization.

In between are some profound changes to the way we look at the final product of our educational system.

First, revitalizing the curriculum from grades 1 to 6 by focusing on the development of literacy, analytical and communication skills is of vital importance in order that we ensure our children's ability to learn how to learn.

Second, ensuring a core curriculum in grades 7, 8 and 9 that emphasizes the development of basic skills and progressive problem-solving will certainly prepare our young children for the important decisions they face in the latter secondary years.

Third, the elimination of streaming in grade 9 will be a big step towards ensuring that individual students are able to make decisions about their futures as they progress and they will therefore remain flexible in an ever-changing world and will not be caught in a stream of study that is either not needed or not of interest to the student.

I want to touch briefly on another important initiative in education, that being the heritage language program. Members will know that the ministers of Education and Citizenship announced this program, which I feel is extremely important in maintaining our cultural diversity.

Starting in September 1989, school boards will be required to provide heritage language classes when a request to teach a particular language is made by the parents of 25 or more students of that board. A board may either offer the classes itself or make an arrangement with another school board. The ability to speak other languages at the same time as maintaining one's sense of heritage is another example of the way in

which government programs can benefit society in many ways.

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Similarly, I anxiously await the review of religious education in public schools as it is being carried out by Dr Glenn Watson. Too often people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds operate in isolation, with no one group knowing about the others' customs. Surely this review is a step towards diversification in religious education in our schools so that generations which follow us will be familiar with a wide variety of beliefs and will be tolerant of these beliefs. This is a seed in the field of racial and religious harmony which I am sure will flourish into an Ontario of the future about which we can only dream.

In the important area of social assistance, the government has again committed itself to reforms which will be introduced to help individuals move from a life of dependence to a life of self-sufficiency and transform welfare cheques into paycheques.

Among these will be increased payments for shelter support to persons on social assistance. In this way, those presently feeling economic hardship caused by inflated housing costs and whose paycheques fall short of providing even the most basic accommodation for themselves and their families will feel relief through this program.

Deduction of moneys earned from moneys to be paid through social assistance and other draconian methods of assessment are not conducive to a sense of providing for oneself, and as a result, we have chosen to change disenchantment into opportunity.

We will remove barriers which serve as disincentives to those who wish to work. As well, we intend to expand networks of employment counselling, referral, basic training and preparation programs in an effort to prepare the citizens of this fine province for work in the varied components of our industrial dynamic. Through this economic development, we are creating vast opportunities and we want to ensure that those on social assistance have the skills to rise to the challenges this province offers.

Lastly, I speak of increased children's benefits. Who would deny a small child adequate food, proper shelter and suitable clothing? This government has committed itself to providing these basic necessities through increased funding, because we believe that the basic necessities must be there if a child is to attain his or her full potential.

We have the wealth and we have the creativity to prevent the unfortunate hardships imposed by an economically divided society. Progress in this area will require the financial support and co-operation of all levels of government and the community at large. I am confident, however, that together we can reason and we can meet this challenge.

I am also confident that we are going to meet a second social challenge critical to our province. I refer to the challenge of maintaining a sense of safety and security in our communities. We remain concerned about the recent adverse effects on the quality of life in our communities caused by drug and alcohol abuse, racial tension and incidents of violence.

Last session, we appointed the Task Force on Illegal Drug Use in Ontario and we quickly responded to several of its prime recommendations. We have announced a mandatory drug education program from grades 4 through 10 in Ontario schools and we increased funding for community-based drug and alcohol addiction programs.

This session, we remain committed to building in our comprehensive antidrug strategy through: education and prevention programs, including antidrug education in primary and secondary schools and community-based programs in high-risk neighbourhoods; a wider range of treatment programs, including employee assistance programs, and the expansion of Ontario's drug enforcement capacity, including a strengthened Ontario Provincial Police drug enforcement unit.

We couple this strategy with other measures aimed at protecting the quality of life in Ontario communities: expanding our efforts to prevent violence against women and children; providing enhanced race relations training to better equip police to respond to the diverse needs of the community they serve; working with the OPP and all municipal police forces to promote racial equality in employment; urging the federal government to effect immediate changes to the Young Offenders Act, and reforming our court system to provide improved access to justice.

This sense of safety and security in our communities is critical to our province's future wellbeing and development.

The issue of our environment remains and will continue to remain a top priority with our government. This is evident in our continuing commitment to win the war on acid rain. As part of that ongoing commitment, Ontario has promised a 60 per cent province-wide reduction of sulphur dioxide emissions. These reductions are

taking place under the Countdown Acid Rain program announced in December 1985 by the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley).

In another step to help control the emissions on acid rain, there have been limits placed on the Inco and Falconbridge nickel smelters in Sudbury, the Algoma Steel iron ore roasting plant in Wawa and all of the Ontario Hydro fossil fuel generating plants in the province. These companies and Ontario Hydro are becoming successful in achieving emission reduction requirements that will noticeably reduce Ontario's major sources of acid rain.

Earlier this year, a very interesting step was taken to address the actual impact of acid rain. The Minister of the Environment and the president of the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences, Liu Hong Liang, signed a memorandum of understanding. This is expected to lead to joint scientific research and an information exchange on acid rain. It is the first signed agreement of its kind between Ontario and China. Our primary goal has always been and will continue to be the achievement of significant reductions in acid rain.

Another important initiative being undertaken is the protection of our ozone layer. On 16 February 1989, the Minister of the Environment tabled a bill to phase out the use of ozone-depleting substances, making Ontario the first province to propose such legislation.

At the municipal level, every member, I am sure, has expounded the importance of the four Rs of waste management: reduce, recycle, recover and reuse.

The student population has the added opportunity to shine in a program named STAR, Student Action for Recycling, announced in October 1988 by the minister.

Industries in Ontario happen to be some of our worst pollution contributors. They are responsible for harming surrounding life on land and waterways. It was therefore incumbent on our government to formulate a plan whereby persistent toxic contaminants would be safeguarded from becoming discharged into our waterways. This plan resulted in a report by experts which concluded that there were methods by which pollution could be substantially controlled.

Mr Speaker, I am sure you would agree that the main priority in any society is a clean and healthy environment. The environment for the most part is vulnerable to man and his technological advances. Our government has endeavoured to continually address and protect the vulnerability of our precious surroundings.

The responsibility to govern is an awesome one, but one which has been taken up by the men and women on this side in earnest, and I feel it betrays the trust placed in this institution by each and every citizen of this province to have it handcuffed and rendered impotent by those who would sit in sneering contempt of the game and players.

I challenge the members of the opposition in the days ahead to step boldly into the fray, not in an attempt to make points or put down the doing of good, but to move forward the process of government, because the responsibility to govern is also the responsibility to legislate, and the responsibility to legislate is borne by each and every member of this place.

Once again, it gives me great pleasure to second the motion to adopt the speech from the throne. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

À la suite d'une motion présentée par M. Pouliot, le débat est ajourné.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The Deputy Speaker: I presume the acting government House leader has some announcements for us.

Hon Mr Fulton: Pursuant to standing order 13, I would like to indicate the business of the House for the coming week. On Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of next week we will continue with the consideration of the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor. I would also like to remind members that by previous motion the House will not sit on Thursday morning to consider private members' business.

The House adjourned at 1650.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

- Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)
 Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)
 Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)
 Beer, Charles (York North L)
 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)
 Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)
Bradley, Hon James J., Minister of the Environment (St Catharines L)
 Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breaugh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)
 Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)
 Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)
Caplan, Hon Elinor, Minister of Health (Orillia L)
 Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)
 Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
 Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)
 Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)
 Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)
Conway, Hon Sean G., Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)
 Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)
 Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)
 Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)
Curling, Hon Alvin, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)
 Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)
 Dietsch, Michael M. (St Catharines-Brock L)
Eakins, Hon John F., Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)
Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A., Speaker (Perth L)
 Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)
Elston, Hon Murray J., Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L)
 Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)
 Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)
 Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)
 Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)
 Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)
 Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)
 Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)
Fontaine, Hon René, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)
Fulton, Hon Ed, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)
Grandmaitre, Hon Bernard C., Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)
 Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)
 Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)
 Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)
 Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)
 Hart, Christine E. (York East L)
 Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)
Hošek, Hon Chaviva, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)
 Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Kanter, Ron (St Andrew-St Patrick L)
Kerrio, Hon Vincent G., Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)
 Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)
 Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)
Kwinter, Hon Monte, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L)
 Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)
 LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)
 Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)
 Lipsett, Ron (Grey L)
 Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L)
 MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L)
 Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)
 Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)
Mancini, Hon Remo, Minister without Portfolio (Essex South L)
 Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)
 Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)
 Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L)
 McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)
 McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)
 McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)
 McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)
 McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)
McLeod, Hon Lyn, Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)
 Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)
Nixon, Hon Robert F., Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics (Brant-Haldimand L)
Oddie Munro, Hon Lily, Minister of Culture and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)
O'Neil, Hon Hugh P., Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Quinte L)
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)
Patten, Hon Richard, Minister of Government Services (Ottawa Centre L)
 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)
Peterson, Hon David R., Premier and President of the Council and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (London Centre L)
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)
Phillips, Hon Gerry, Minister of Citizenship (Scarborough-Agincourt L)
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott and Russell L)
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)
Ramsay, Hon David, Minister of Correctional Services (Timiskaming L)
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-Walkerville L)
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)
 Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Riddell, Hon Jack, Minister of Agriculture and Food (Huron L)
 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)
Scott, Hon Ian G., Attorney General (St George-St David L)
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)
Smith, Hon E. Joan, Solicitor General (London South L)
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)
Sorbara, Hon Gregory S., Minister of Labour (York Centre L)
 South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)
 Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)
 Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)
Sweeney, Hon John, Minister of Community and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)
 Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)
 Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)
 Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)
Ward, Hon Christopher C., Minister of Education (Wentworth North L)
 Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)
Wilson, Hon Mavis, Minister without Portfolio (Dufferin-Peel L)
 Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)
Wong, Hon Robert C., Minister of Energy (Fort York L)
Wrye, Hon William, Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

*The alphabetical list of members appears in each issue. Lists of the members of the executive council, parliamentary assistants and members of committees, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Second Session, 34th Parliament
Monday, 1 May 1989

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday, 1 May 1989

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

COMMISSION ON ELECTION FINANCES

The Speaker: Just before I recognize the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr Pouliot), I beg to inform the House I have today laid upon the table the 12th report of the Commission on Election Finances respecting the indemnities and allowances of the members of this assembly. If the members are interested, they will find copies of that report inside their desks.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HOME CARE

Mr Pouliot: Underfunding by this government and bureaucratic delays in developing a realistic funding formula for the Victorian Order of Nurses have indeed placed this venerable order into a state of crisis. Unless the government urgently addresses the estimated \$2.5-million deficit for 1988-89, all nursing services across Ontario, and more specifically in some parts of the north, will be put in jeopardy.

Underfunding of services may very shortly result in the following: reduced access to home care nursing services for certain categories of patients and/or geographic areas of the province; increased costs to taxpayers who will have to fund the higher-cost alternative of sending more patients who could have been treated in their homes into hospital, and increased pressure on hospitals which will experience much higher demands for both active treatment and chronic care beds and VON services, if VON services are reduced.

I urge this government, through the honourable Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan), to address this urgent matter at its earliest convenience.

NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr Harris: Ontario Liberals made history last week when they failed to make a single mention of northern Ontario in the throne speech. I wish I could say it was an accident, but the facts speak for themselves. This is, after all, the party that opposed the creation of a special northern ministry by our party in the 1970s. This is the

party whose former leader once vowed to never again set foot in northern Ontario.

In government, they abandoned the north on the softwood lumber issue. They took the \$30 million that the tax generates each year and put it into general revenues instead of reforestation. They have sold out the north with ill-conceived parks policy; they have closed down the town of Temagami; they have ignored gasoline prices; they have shelved the four-laning program, and now they have threatened passenger rail service and jeopardized industrial investment.

The Peterson Liberals may have given up on the north, but northerners have not. In the wake of the throne speech, northeastern Ontario mayors decided this weekend to call for the establishment of a northern Ontario embassy in Toronto. If the government will not speak for and promote investment in the north, they want an official presence in southern Ontario that will.

It is a sad day when a proud and important part of Ontario says it needs an embassy within its own province. It is sadder still that after four years of Liberal government they are probably right.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I wonder if I could remind all members of standing order 24(b). I usually recognize a member and no other members are to interrupt.

FRANK PAZNER

Mr Offer: I am pleased to rise today to recognize the achievements of one Frank Pazner, a long-time resident of Mississauga. Mr Pazner is to be honoured at a dinner on 17 May when he will become the 10th Mississauga resident to receive the Gordon S. Shipp Memorial Award.

Frank Pazner is one of those individuals who provide an outstanding contribution to their community and city. He has personally given many thousands of hours for several charities and has also provided the impetus and driving force in raising much-needed dollars for those charities. It is with great pride that another Mississauga resident is recognized.

Mr Pazner exemplifies those persons who volunteer their time for so many necessary causes. These efforts provide an important and

vital service to a city like Mississauga, a city of dynamic growth in all sectors. Volunteers are the foundation upon which organizations not only survive but grow. Volunteers are there when needed, providing a driving force with new and fresh ideas. I believe we are well served by individuals like Frank Pazner, individuals with a commitment to a cause, a dedication to meet that commitment and an effort to make that commitment a reality.

I would like to personally congratulate Frank Pazner who, with his wife Maria and children Andrejka, Mark and Nadiya, provides an example for many to follow.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN ROMANIA

Mr Kormos: Two and a half million Hungarians live in the Transylvania region of Romania. This has been their homeland for centuries now, and it is only because of the 1920 Treaty of Trianon that this is Romanian territory. These Hungarians are the victims of a brutal program of cultural genocide by the iron-fisted Romanian government.

Hungarian-language schools and colleges have been shut down. Hungarian-language radio and television programs have been eliminated. Indeed, Hungarian names are banned. There has been forced relocation of Hungarian university graduates to eastern Romania. A village destruction program is now under way: thousands of Hungarian villages in Transylvania will be bulldozed. So far this year, over 400 Hungarians have been killed by Romanian border guards as they attempted to escape to Hungary or Yugoslavia.

These human rights abuses are currently being investigated by the United Nations, and our federal government has been petitioned to use its resources in an effort to end this brutal oppression. Only last night, Welland's Hungarian Self Culture Society expressed its support of the Hungarian refugees from Romania with the presentation of cash support and an appeal to our government to intervene in this intolerable oppression.

We in this Legislative Assembly must express our indignation at the conduct of the Romanian government. We must join in the boycott of Romanian products being imported into Ontario and Canada. We must protest this insanity with the loudest and clearest of voices.

1340

NATUROPATHY

Mr Eves: The Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) would like citizens of Ontario to become

more aware of health care services and funding in this province, and yet her ministry has failed to keep the public informed about important changes in the regulation of health professionals in this province.

The ministry is presently considering a report of the health professions legislation review, a highly controversial report which limits the scopes of practice of alternative medical professions. The report proposes to deregulate the naturopathy profession. The deregulation of this profession has caused a great deal of confusion for the clients and patients of doctors of naturopathy. The definitions of "drug," "diagnosis" and "assessment" have caused the greatest confusion.

It is possible that this report will greatly alter the lives of the estimated 300,000 Ontarians who seek health care advice from naturopaths, yet the Minister of Health has been silent about this report. She has not clarified how this report will improve access to a greater variety of health care services in the province.

Instead of discussing the health care needs of Ontarians, she continues to leave the clients of naturopaths in the dark about how their choice of medical treatment will be affected by the deregulation of naturopathy. It is time for the Minister of Health to stand up and inform Ontarians about how her decision will affect them.

PETERBOROUGH TEDDIES

Mr Adams: By the end of February, Peterborough Teddies had presented 974 bears to individuals or organizations, including patients in Peterborough Civic Hospital's paediatric and long-stay wards.

The teddy bear is a symbol of goodwill, love, affection, comfort and security. Peterborough Teddies is a nonprofit volunteer group formed in 1985. Adopting the premise that you are never too young or too old to hug a teddy, the group presents teddies to those needing love, comfort and friendship.

Teddy bears are purchased and donated through the Give a Bear program. The emergency kits provided for disaster victims by the Peterborough County-City Disaster Committee now include teddy bears. They provide immediate comfort to children who have been involved in house fires.

Recently, all five of the Peterborough and district ambulance vehicles have been equipped with teddies. The toy bears are used to comfort children and other patients in distress. This teddy

bear therapy has been extremely well received, and the service expects to use about 100 bears each year.

I congratulate Judy Gibson, chairbear of Peterborough Teddies, and her colleagues for eight years of bear care. I congratulate Judy too for organizing the Cancer Survivors Day.

HOME CARE

Miss Martel: I too wish to express my concern with the Ministry of Health's proposed four per cent increase to the Victorian Order of Nurses for this fiscal year. The Sudbury chapter of the VON is fortunately not yet in a deficit position and can serve all clients who qualify for home care. In the 1988-89 fiscal year, some 77,000 client visits were made on a cumulative basis. Roughly 3,000 patients were seen. The number of clients, visits and services offered have all increased, and the Sudbury branch has been active in assessing and responding to the new needs within the community served.

If the Ministry of Health caps the negotiated fee at four to five per cent again this fiscal year, our branch will have no alternative but to cut services presently offered. The current pilot project regarding evening service will be terminated. A decline in hours of service per client will follow suit. The result will be increasing hardship for those who are most vulnerable in our society.

The government talks a good line about community service. It makes sense to provide the financial—

The Speaker: Thank you.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

COURT SYSTEM

Hon Mr Scott: I am pleased today to announce the intention of the government to make major changes in the structure of the trial courts in Ontario. The reorganization of our system of trial courts is not an end in itself, but it is an essential precondition to an efficient, fair, well-managed system of justice in which our citizens can continue to have confidence. The changes that are proposed will, I believe, provide the framework for an effective, accessible and affordable system designed to serve the people as we move into the next century.

Our present court system has been with us since 1881. While it has been frequently modified over the last 100 years to reflect new social needs, the system designed by Oliver Mowat has remained essentially intact. It has, however, been the object of frequent ad hoc

changes. Almost two decades ago, the Ontario Law Reform Commission assigned the blame for public dissatisfaction on "the nature of the organization and the inefficiency of the system." Judges, lawyers and lay people alike recognize the essential truth of this statement.

For most people, the existing trial court structure is confusing and remote. There are eight different trial courts divided into roughly three hierarchical levels. Some courts are located throughout the province while others are centralized mainly at Toronto. In some subject matter areas the jurisdictions of different courts overlap, with the result that litigants are faced with a choice of courts in which to bring their proceeding. As well, the existence of different levels in the hierarchy promotes the inaccurate perception that some courts are better than others.

In 1987, Mr Justice Zuber released his report on Ontario's court system. The subsequent consultation between the ministry and representatives from the courts, the legal profession and public organizations provided valuable information.

I believe that we have carefully examined every major structural option presented to us. Our point of departure has been that the trial court system exists to serve the public by ensuring the orderly and expeditious resolution of disputes. The government's vision for a new trial court structure is based on three principles.

First, it will be regional, not centralized. Earlier in the year I announced the reorganization of the ministry's courts administration program and crown attorney staff into eight regions. The regionalization of the judiciary will parallel these two changes. All judges will be assigned to a region.

In the second place, our vision contemplates a single trial court. All judges of the new court would possess the jurisdiction of both superior and provincial court judges and would be appointed either by the federal government or under arrangements made by the province with the federal government. Judges appointed to the new court would generally be expected to devote most of their time to one of three areas of law: civil litigation, criminal law or family law.

This vision contemplates the elimination of the hierarchical divisions which have been a characteristic of the Ontario trial court system since the end of the last century. These divisions were originally justified for purposes of appeal. That justification no longer exists. Increasingly, the hierarchy of the courts has been confusing and, regrettably, has often created the sense that one

court is better than another or that one court does more important work than another. As well, the hierarchy has made judicial and administrative management of the system especially difficult.

The creation of a single trial court will allow parties to a family law dispute, for example, to have all aspects of the dispute dealt with in one proceeding before one judge. Currently, family law jurisdiction is fragmented between courts, with the result that the resolution of a single dispute often requires two or more proceedings in two or more different courts. We are heartened by the success of the unified family court initiative that has been in existence in Hamilton for 12 years.

The third principle of the vision is efficient and co-operative management of the system, the personnel and the resources assigned to it. Management of a court system is a particularly difficult and complex undertaking requiring the co-operation of administrators, judges, crown attorneys and the bar. In our system, each has an independent role to play which cannot be ceded to the others.

For example, some elements of administrative decision-making are reserved to the judges alone in order to ensure the maintenance of their constitutionally entrenched independence from the executive or legislative branches. On the other hand, only popularly elected assemblies can provide the necessary resources and assign them to the system. Finally, crown attorneys and the bar each have an independent role upon which neither the judges nor the administration can encroach.

I believe that the key to efficient and co-operative management of the system depends not only on the existence of a single trial court but on its organization on a regional basis. A regional senior judge located in each of the eight regions will be responsible for the management of judicial resources in the region, subject to the authority of a Chief Judge of Ontario. It is expected that he will work closely with the regional administrator of court services, the regional crown attorney and representatives of the regional bar.

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Under our Constitution in Canada, structural reform of the courts requires the co-operation of both federal and provincial governments. Ontario has the authority to enact legislation establishing a structure, but judges of the superior and district courts, under our Constitution, must be appointed by the government at Ottawa. For this

reason, changes to structure require co-operation at both levels of government.

I have already been to Ottawa for discussions with the Attorney General of Canada with a view to implementing proposals that are set out in this statement and the vision it sets for the future. I will recognize that the challenge represented by the vision will require detailed discussion with the Attorney General and my provincial colleagues, but I am confident that they will be prepared to consider the proposals with an open mind.

I will be introducing legislation later today that will mark the first phase towards implementation of the goal I have set out. I hope to have this phase completed, with the co-operation of this assembly, by the end of 1990.

This legislation, the first phase of change, will establish a single court called the Ontario Court of Justice. It will, for the time being, be divided into two divisions, the general division and the provincial division.

The general division will unite or merge the existing High Court, the district court and the surrogate courts. The merger or the unification of these courts will provide a substantial pool of federally appointed judges assigned to each region of the province. This will mean, I believe, significant improvements in the level of service provided to litigants throughout Ontario who, in some cases, must wait for a judge of the proper jurisdiction or authority to arrive in their town before proceeding.

The other division of the Ontario Court will be the provincial division and it will consist of provincial judges who will continue, for the time being, their existing jurisdiction.

Jurisdiction over young offenders, which is now divided between the criminal and family divisions of the existing provincial court, will be consolidated in the new Ontario Court. It is my intention that this jurisdiction will, over a period of time, be exercised primarily by judges who concentrate on family law.

In addition, I am pleased to announce that the small claims court limit will be increased from \$1,000 to \$5,000. These claims will now be the responsibility of the general division of the new Ontario Court. This represents a dramatic increase in access to small claims procedures, especially outside Toronto. I will also be asking the Ontario rules committee to consider devising new rules to expedite the hearing of cases between \$5,000 and \$15,000.

I believe the legislation the government is introducing today and the discussions we will be

having with the government of Canada represent historic steps in the evolution of Ontario's court system. In total, the vision contemplated represents the most significant change in the administration of justice in the province in well over a century. Those who have been consulted and worked with us—the judges, the crown attorneys, the lawyers and the members of the public—clearly recognize our goal: the creation of a structure which would facilitate the administration of justice in the province not only in this decade but well into the next century. As I have said, these fundamental changes are a precondition to a simpler, more efficient, less expensive and co-operatively managed system in which all citizens of our province will continue to have confidence and pride.

I know that for some, not excluding this Attorney General, the disappearance of the old ways, the old traditions and the old distinctions will be a difficult and wrenching experience, but with the introduction of this legislation and as we move into this process, I am heartened and encouraged by the virtually unanimous recognition on all sides and in all parts of the province that, where necessary, old systems must give way to new systems if the administration of justice is to continue in the next century to serve the needs and meet the aspirations of the people we all serve.

START UP PROGRAM

Hon Mr Curling: I would like to pay tribute today to some very special young Ontarians. These individuals are extremely successful. Each one of them has had the courage and stamina and personal ability to set up his or her own business. Early today, I met 28 such successful dreamers. They are the young men and women who received the Minister's Award for Outstanding Achievement.

This award is given each year to young people who have set up outstanding businesses through the Ministry of Skills Development's Start Up program. This year we looked at 3,400 participants in the program and selected 28 for this special recognition. The award recipients come from all over Ontario and their businesses reflect that diversity—everything from the production of standard-size mats for slo-pitch baseball to arranging murder mystery packages for hotels and resorts.

From North Bay, as an example, is Peter Conti Custom Woodworking and Design. Peter has a long history with this ministry. After training as an apprentice carpenter in the ministry's appren-

ticeship program at George Brown College in Toronto, Peter returned to North Bay to open up his own custom woodworking company. Peter's company supplies custom-made kitchen cabinets, store fixtures and furniture to homes and retail outlets.

These young people represent more than what I have described so far. They represent the spirit of entrepreneurship which is necessary for the continuing health of our economy. In the last five years more than 90 per cent of jobs in Ontario have been created by the owners of small businesses.

When you meet these young men and women you realize that there is indeed a bright future ahead, not only for them personally but for all of us who benefit from their dedication, their creativity and their success.

The 28 recipients of the award, and every one of the other 3,372 Start Up participants, deserve not only our congratulations but our support and encouragement as well.

The ministry, as well as the Start Up program's co-sponsors—the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, local chambers of commerce and boards of trade and the Royal Bank of Canada—will continue to show their support and partnership with these co-sponsors by guaranteeing interest-free loans through the youth venture capital and student venture capital programs.

I would like to ask all members to join me in congratulating not only the recipients of the awards but every one of the young entrepreneurs across the province who took a chance to fulfil a dream. Every one of them is a winner.

RESPONSES

START UP PROGRAM

Mr R. F. Johnston: I join with other members in congratulating the 28 subsidized entrepreneurs from the province's plan. I think it is important, however, to take this opportunity to put this in the context of what the government is doing around summer employment in Ontario.

At the same time as it has decided to expand its commitment to entrepreneurship as an option for kids, it has cut back, by tens of thousands, jobs that will be available in government and in agencies through Experience '89. It has cut back by thousands those jobs that will be available under summer employment programs.

In fact, you cannot even apply for them in southern Ontario these days. You have to be in an area identified by this government as severely unemployed to be a student who can access this program, as if the only thing that were important

in this experience is the job rather than the experience those kids can get in these other things besides entrepreneurship, which this government seems to be so big on.

There has been no major expansion, for instance, of the co-op sector, to which the minister did not even allude today, in terms of projects which are now only up to 36 across the province. This program of entrepreneurship has not been a failure. No one would say it has, when 70 per cent of those projects started that are ongoing, year-long projects continue to operate after three years. That is pretty good response. I would not be upset by that.

But I am concerned at the priority of cutting back in the other areas. The only other area the minister has expanded on is in the Environmental Youth Corps, that terribly underfunded group from last year. He promised in the election to create 3,000 jobs per summer. Last summer all the jobs this minister could create were 752 positions.

Now they have decided, "We don't want to be under attack any more in the estimates and on the floor of the House on this, so we'll increase those minimum-wage jobs to the full 3,000 at the same time as we are cutting them back in Experience '89 and in the summer employment programs across the province."

It is absolutely mind-boggling. Something that I am sure members do not even know about this particular program is that one of the major benefactors is another group of entrepreneurs, called the banks, in Ontario. I think it would be only appropriate for members to know where this money is going that we put out in terms of loan guarantees.

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Did the members know, for instance, that the Royal Bank of Canada receives an administrative fee of \$125 per approved loan; a \$25 per application screening fee; and a \$5 credit check fee per applicant? Then, of course, it again gets money for the summer program portion of that.

What we have here is a subsidization; the notion of government welfare and support for loans for local entrepreneurs at the same time as the minister is cutting back the number of kids who will be able to work with the retarded this year; the same with the number of kids who will be able to work with other ministries, like the Ministry of Housing for instance, who have been there in the past but who will not return because of his cutbacks; yet he will allow money to be flowed to the Royal Bank for these fee charges and to his young entrepreneurs, as if they should

be given a lesson that all loans to entrepreneurs should be guaranteed by the government or why else bother going into business at all.

COURT SYSTEM

Mr Kormos: First, we do want to congratulate the Attorney General (Mr Scott) for the initiatives expressed in his statement today. The implementation of proposals contained in the Zuber report has been long awaited and is indeed welcome.

At the same time, we have some concerns about omissions in the statement today. Immediate concerns that have been expressed across the province, first by provincial judges: concerns about the shortage of provincial judges, the inadequacy of courtroom facilities and the lack of security in existing courtroom facilities appear not to have been addressed in the statement by the minister.

The lack of consideration of the Henderson report remains of great concern, and there has been, as we know, a long-standing concern by provincial judges about the failure of the government to implement those Henderson recommendations. It would seem essential that those immediate concerns be addressed at the same time as these long-term goals are initiated.

They are not alone, because if the government is sincere about accessibility, then it must also address funding of legal aid services and community legal services across the province, as well as issues of concern to the justices of the peace.

The Speaker: The member's time has now expired.

VISITOR

The Speaker: Before I recognize other members to respond, I know all members would want me to draw their attention to a former member, Lorne Henderson, the former member for Lambton, who is with us today.

COURT SYSTEM

Mr Sterling: I find it odd that with this very significant announcement by the Attorney General (Mr Scott), three and a half minutes of the official opposition's response was to what I consider a fairly minor announcement by another minister of the crown.

I would like to congratulate the Attorney General for starting down the road to a significant reform of our court system. While Martin Goldfarb might have advised the Ontario Liberal Party to use the word "vision" every time it

would have an opportunity, we did not expect to see it 20 or 30 times in one statement.

Notwithstanding that, this vision, which is now shared by the Attorney General of this province, has been put forward by many members of the bar, many members of the judiciary, over the last eight to nine to 10 years. I take particular pride with regard to the bar of which I am a member, the Carleton bar association in the Ottawa-Carleton area, headed by Colin McKinnon, which put forward a proposal very similar to the Attorney General's some seven or eight years ago.

The first stage of this particular proposal to reform the court system will not be easy. There will be required, during that period of time, many additional consultations. There is a lot of very important nitty-gritty to work out with the members of the bar, members of the bench and with other people involved with the judicial system.

That is going to require a great deal of co-operation on the part of all the players in this particular matter. I would like to pledge, on behalf of my party, our complete co-operation in trying to achieve the goals that have been put forward and a vision that is not only the vision of the Attorney General but is a vision of many of the people of Ontario, including myself.

START UP PROGRAM

Mrs Cunningham: We would like to respond to the statement of the Minister of Skills Development (Mr Curling). I too attended the luncheon this afternoon and was very proud to witness these young individuals who have been so successful in their own entrepreneurial work. It is wonderful to see that kind of commitment to their businesses and to our province.

However, I also had a chance to chat with them and they would like me to send a few comments to the minister so that he could improve a couple of their programs through their own experience.

One of them suggested that he hired an older worker in the Transitions program and they would like the minister to know that although he has only been able to spend \$1 million out of the \$8 million budgeted for this particular last fiscal year, there is a great opportunity for these people. These are young people hiring older people to work with them.

There are two problems. First, in the Transitions program one has to be 45. These young people tell me that is not right. If people are looking to be retrained and to go back into the

world of work and work with young people, we should be lowering that age.

The second point they raised was that some of the people in Transitions are not encouraged to work long hours. The minister should look into that. These people work long hours at their work and if we have older people coming back and working with them, they too should be working longer hours and we should not have those kinds of restrictions on the Transitions program.

With regard to apprenticeship programs, some of these young people advised me that in fact they were graduates, but more of them had been in the apprenticeship program and did not graduate, so we have some advice for the minister on that one too.

First of all, we should be working with the school system and young people should be in apprenticeship programs sooner. Second, although on-the-job training is extremely important, young people are telling us that those kinds of skills jobs need to be made more important through the schools, parents, the media and through the government.

I hope that the minister will strive to make the whole province know that there is a tremendous skills shortage, not only of people doing the work but of those training.

In conclusion, the ratio of journeymen to apprenticeships needs to be looked at. We have mentioned it before.

It was a wonderful lunch. I have come back with all these wonderful ideas from the recipients of the awards.

ORAL QUESTIONS

PROPERTY SPECULATION

Mr Laughren: I have a question for the Treasurer. The Treasurer will know that in Metro Toronto the average resale price of a home in March 1989 went up to \$277,000; but it is not simply a Toronto problem, it is up to over \$190,000 average across the province.

Since that price in Metro of \$277,000 requires a family income in excess of \$102,000, is the Treasurer finally prepared to make a commitment to introduce a speculation tax on houses in Ontario?

Hon R. F. Nixon: When we are within three or four weeks of the budget, I think it would be inappropriate for me to indicate to the honourable member who is questioning me what specifically I have in mind. I think he is aware that the proposal for a speculation tax has come from himself and other reasonable sources over the last number of weeks, and I have always indicated

that, while I was not enthused about it, I thought the concept had merit. But I think it is inappropriate for me to talk about it in more detail now, other than to say no.

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Mr Laughren: It is refreshing to hear the Treasurer at least say some positive words about the tax. Two years ago now, he said the price of homes had peaked, and they were at \$188,000. The following year, the Premier (Mr Peterson) said the heat was out of the market, and the average price was \$233,000. Now we are up to \$277,000. So perhaps the Treasurer is seeing the error of his ways.

The Treasurer should know that the federal goods and services tax, which will be introduced in January 1991, will according to the federal figures add approximately \$14,000 to the price of a new home. It will also add to the price of resale homes because previously untaxed services, such as commissions and lawyers' fees, will be taxed as well.

Does the Treasurer understand that because the new sales tax will not take place until January 1991, the federal budget is an invitation to speculators to get into the market in the next 18 months and drive up the price of homes even further?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I understand the point of view the honourable member is expressing and I am glad to hear it. This is exactly where it should be put. Without making a mistake like I made previously, there is some indication that some of the prices are not rising as rapidly as they have in the past. Perhaps that is about as safe a point as I can put on it.

I personally feel market forces are having some effect on pricing. It is interesting to note, as the honourable member himself pointed out about three months ago, that Toronto is not the centre of the most rapidly growing price surge and that this is an area which is even more attractive for people to live in, and it is called South Dumfries township.

Mr Laughren: The federal Minister of Finance and the federal Minister of State (Housing) have both indicated that the goods and services tax, to take place in 1991, will indeed cause an affordability problem in the housing market. I guess what we are asking the Treasurer to think about is whether or not he wants to be a silent partner in the most draconian budget this country has ever seen. Will he make a commitment to do something about speculation in the housing market?

Hon R. F. Nixon: Certainly I am the last person to defend the federal budget. I am not some sort of sub rosa supporter of it in that connection. We have to make our own decisions here, based on what the federal people do, and then we have to simply cut our pattern to fit that cloth. That is exactly what we are doing as we review exactly the impact from the federal budget, and we will design our programs accordingly.

I am not going to make any particular commitment to a land speculation tax, but the honourable member and other members who have heard my response over the months know what I think about it.

HOME CARE

Mr Reville: My question is to the Premier. I would like the Premier to help us with a basic reality check. This is what the government says: "The increasing number of elderly people and the requirements of chronic illness point out a need to evolve an effective and rationalized long-term-care continuum. Research has shown that many seniors now living in institutions would be better cared for in the community with appropriate support services."

Now, let us look at what the government does. Last winter, the opposition had to come to the aid of the Red Cross, which was about to go down the tubes because the government was not funding it adequately. This year, the Victorian Order of Nurses is saying that unless it gets a better funding deal from the government, it will not be able to continue to provide the home care the government says it wants.

Would the Premier indicate to the House whether or not we can expect this government to take care of the problems of the Victorian Order of Nurses quickly and appropriately?

Hon Mr Peterson: I appreciate the honourable member's question. As I understand it, the minister is meeting this week with the Victorian Order of Nurses. As I understand it, the deficit is in the \$2.5 million range. I think there is some acknowledgement that perhaps some operational changes can be brought into play to assist in that in the future. The government has certainly suggested it is willing to help. I think it is a question of getting all the people together to work out a strategy for the future.

My honourable friend, I am sure, will agree with the government when it says it just cannot go in automatically and write a cheque, whatever the deficit any group runs. That is not a responsible way to run a government. We have to

make sure this is planned in an orderly way and on an ongoing basis. We have great respect for the work of the VON, but I think we have to organize this thing in the long term and not just patch up a short-term problem today.

Mr Reville: The VON would be delighted if the government would begin to behave with a view towards the long term.

There is a second check against reality that I would like the Premier to help us with. The government has been saying, often, that it needs to contain the cost spiral of the health care system. In fact, it says the benefits of a community-based system include cost-effective capital and operating funding. The Premier knows, as does every member of the House, that a home care visit is about 40 bucks a day; hospital is between 200 and 400 bucks a day.

How can the government even contemplate saving money by nickel and diming the VON? It will have to pay for it in increased hospital costs. Will the Premier not acknowledge that there is a certain illogic to ignoring the plight of the Victorian Order of Nurses?

Hon Mr Peterson: We are not ignoring the plight of the Victorian Order of Nurses. That is an important constituent element of the continuum of health care services offered in the province. Obviously, we need proper institutional care as well as proper community-based care. The minister said, and I am sure my honourable friend has read the throne speech carefully, that there is a new emphasis on community-based care. We have to make sure that all of it is well managed. I think my honourable friend will find that will be the case.

Mr Pouliot: It should be obvious to the Premier, with high respect of course, that he cannot or should not continue to press those highly qualified and dedicated people to do more work for less pay. The Premier will surely be aware that the average nurse in the order is paid approximately nine per cent less than those with comparable experience and qualifications in general hospitals. By way of a question: Now is the time, very simply, to put the respect and the commitment the Premier has into the proverbial pay envelope. Will he commit his government to redress this injustice?

Hon Mr Peterson: My honourable friend seems to find injustice everywhere. That is his nature and the nature of his colleagues opposite. Let me say that I think this problem can be addressed. As I said, the honourable minister is meeting with the group some time this week and I

think my honourable friend will be delighted with the results, whatever they are.

Mr Eves: I would like to ask the Premier a somewhat similar question, seeing as he did not answer that question or the two supplementaries.

Mr Ballinger: Sure he answered it. You were not listening.

Mr Eves: We are constantly hearing about the government's supposed policy to move away from institutionalized care in the health care field and towards home care. How can the Premier stand there and justify refusing to adequately fund the Victorian Order of Nurses, which provides 80 per cent of nursing visitations in Ontario? Does this not seem somewhat inconsistent to him?

Hon Mr Peterson: The answer is no, I say to my honourable friend. I think I answered the question quite fully to my two friends from the official opposition and my answer to my honourable colleague is exactly the same. The member may not have understood it, but the member in the back row over there did understand it. Maybe that says the members in the back row are far ahead.

Mr Eves: It certainly does not surprise me that the member for Durham-York (Mr Ballinger) understood.

The government's very own Price Waterhouse report, which the Ministry of Health commissioned last year on the Ontario home care program, estimates that home care saves the Ontario government about \$500 million a year—in fact, in excess of \$500 million a year—in operational funding, and last year alone saved an estimated \$1.8 billion in capital funding that it would have cost the government had it not had this very important service.

The VON projects that this year its shortfall will be in excess of \$2.5 million. This is in addition to the \$2.6 million they already have as a deficit. The rates this year were established by the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) without any consultation or negotiation whatsoever with them, according to the VON.

Why does the Premier not live up to the rhetoric of his government and make a commitment to the House and to the people of Ontario today that he will adequately fund the Victorian Order of Nurses?

1420

Hon Mr Peterson: We adequately fund everybody. There is sometimes a difference of opinion over the question of adequacy. As I told my honourable friend, we will work it out and I

am sure my honourable friend will be quite excited about the resolution.

Mr Eves: Talking about living up to its commitment, it is this government's very own report, which Price Waterhouse did on its behalf, that made this recommendation that it is not living up to.

The government has a Minister of Health who is quoted as saying that beds are no longer the benchmark in the health care system today, and yet we have seen the home care service in our province seriously compromised because of the government's lack of commitment to it. The government talks about community health. Community health represents only four per cent and the home care component represents only 2.3 per cent of the Ministry of Health budget this year.

Does the Premier consider that to be a sufficient commitment by his government to community-based health care?

Hon Mr Peterson: My honourable friend argues a different line on different days, depending on what he reads in the newspaper that particular day, but I do not want to let that deter us from the strategy this government has.

As I told my honourable friend, we have great respect for the work of the VON. I am sure we can work out this situation as we expand, as a government, into community-based care. I think everything the minister has said to the member is quite consistent.

Our idea, frankly, of running a health care system is somewhat unlike that of the member. They write a cheque to everybody who makes a noise that particular day. I say to my friend what he is seeing today is a health care system that has been planned and rationalized in a thoughtful, long-term way, and we are going to be able to keep a quality system, a system that looks after all the needs of people in society. I think my honourable friend will be very proud of the results of that. He should not get deterred just by reading one article in the paper.

PROVINCIAL COURT JUDGES

Mr Sterling: I have a question of the Attorney General. He said in his statement today, "Management of a court system is a particularly difficult and complex undertaking requiring the co-operation of administrators, judges, crown attorneys and the bar."

Given that the provincial court judges are seriously considering job action in order to bring attention to the total frustration and concerns they have with the deteriorating system of justice in this province, what priority is the Attorney

General going to give to reviewing and responding to the recommendations of the Henderson report?

Hon Mr Scott: I know all honourable members will be pleased to know that we give this the highest priority. The honourable member who asked the question will want to know that we established, with the judges, a mechanism designed to determine a salary level for them subject to the determinations made by the executive council. That report has now been on hand. We are obliged to give it earnest and serious consideration. We are doing that and the government, I know, hopes to respond in due course.

Mr Sterling: The Attorney General knows this report has been referred to the standing committee on administration of justice of the Legislature, and he also knows the government controls not only the business of the House but also the business of all the committees.

Considering the matters that are before the justice committee—they include Bill 4, the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force Complaints Amendment Act; Bill 149, the Trespass to Property Amendment Act, and Bill 187, the Police and Sheriffs Statute Law Amendment Act, as well as the Henderson report—what priority does he put on the Henderson report with respect to these other pieces of legislation? Is he willing to put the Henderson report at the top of the priority list, as are we in the opposition?

Hon Mr Scott: There must be some legislative equivalent of the street expression "gimme a break." We have given the Henderson report, which comes before the justice committee, the highest priority. Indeed, between sessions we asked for unanimous consent so the matter could come to the justice committee before the House came back. Somebody's House leader refused to give consent so the matter is now where it is. Notwithstanding that kind of effort, we intend to respond to it at an early date.

Mr Sterling: The only time this became a priority with this government was after it was raised in the justice committee by myself. The fact of the matter is they wanted to give our party about two days' notice to have this hearing, when we are involved in other legislative committees.

I am quoting from an article in the *Globe and Mail*: "The job of selling court reform has now become much more difficult because Mr Scott lost the goodwill of many of the important players. Many judges, lawyers and colleagues who have crossed swords with him in the past are embittered."

How does the Attorney General expect to implement the Zuber report and take forward his, in quotes, "vision", if he cannot even handle a small situation or a situation dealing with the provincial court judges and dealing with the Henderson report in a timely manner? How does he expect to get further and larger reforms through?

Hon Mr Scott: In answering the question, I owe an apology to the member for Nipissing (Mr Harris) for inadvertently suggesting that his veto had prevented this matter getting to the standing committee on administration of justice. I am advised by my House leader that the person responsible for that action on the part of the third party was in fact the member for Parry Sound (Mr Eves) who, otherwise an excellent friend of mine showing a high level of co-operation at every turn in the House, has prevented the Henderson report, aided and abetted by the member for Carleton (Mr Sterling), from getting before the justice committee.

Hon Mr Nixon: So the judges suffer.

Hon Mr Scott: And so the judges suffer. Be that as it may—

Interjections.

Mr Eves: Mr Speaker, on a point of personal privilege—

The Speaker: Order. Point of personal privilege.

Mr Eves: —I have never prevented the Henderson report from being debated in the justice committee whatsoever. This is a government—

The Speaker: Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The Attorney General.

Hon Mr Scott: Well, every time you have them neatly pinned, they take the hot potato and pass it from one to the other, from row to row. I will say one thing: The member for Mississauga South (Mrs Marland) is not responsible for this attitude on the part of the Tory party. If it was up to her and not up to the front bench, this matter might have been dealt with by the third party in a productive way.

The Speaker: Order. Does that complete your response?

Hon Mr Scott: As I indicated to my friend the member for Carleton, the government will be responding to this very shortly.

ELECTRICITY DEMAND AND SUPPLY

Mr Charlton: I have a question for the Minister of Energy. I am absolutely sure the

minister has had the opportunity to review Ontario Hydro's response to the select committee on energy's recommendations from January of this year.

The minister will be aware that this response by Hydro to the select committee's report is, to say the least, a disgraceful effort and a direct insult to all the members of the select committee. The minister will know it is a response in which Hydro has regurgitated old data, which the select committee has already reviewed and data the select committee was concerned about. The recommendations the select committee made in this report were recommendations on the areas of Hydro demand/supply planning strategy, about which we felt Hydro's work was inadequate.

The Speaker: The question?

Mr Charlton: Will the minister assure this House today that he will take this response from Ontario Hydro and appropriately place it in the garbage, and direct Ontario Hydro to get on in a serious and meaningful way to deal with the recommendations of the select committee?

Hon Mr Wong: In response to the member for Hamilton Mountain, let me say that the government's first and main priority in terms of demand/supply planning for electricity in this province to the year 2000 and beyond is based upon energy conservation and energy efficiency.

When the honourable member seems to suggest that perhaps Hydro is not listening, is not doing enough in that area, let me remind the House that in February of last year the cabinet instructed Hydro to give us a specific set of targets. They gave us a 5,500-megawatt figure, which would be not insignificant: this would be equivalent to one and a half Darlington plants.

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Nevertheless, this government said to Ontario Hydro, "We believe that you can do more." We are, as the honourable member knows, in the process of passing amendments to the Power Corporation Act. In addition, last year together we passed the first Energy Efficiency Act in all of Canada.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon Mr Wong: These are some of the measures that are being taken.

Mrs Grier: With all due respect, I think the minister misses the point of the response from Hydro that was released today. What was before the select committee on energy was a strategy put forward by Hydro as to how it was to go into the next century. The select committee said the

strategy was missing a number of important elements and made some recommendations.

On the recommendations the minister has just referred to, Hydro's response to the committee's suggestion that it do more on energy efficiency was to say, "The committee's recommendation is consistent with our existing draft strategy." What kind of a response is that? Can the minister be very clear? Does he consider the response by Hydro adequate and is he going to insist that Hydro come up with the studies and the planning and the figures that the select committee called for?

Hon Mr Wong: This government believes that what we need is a proper, legitimate response. Just so that the honourable member knows, last month I made a reference to the Ontario Energy Board with relation to the forthcoming rate hearings. In paragraph 5 I specifically addressed the energy management plans and programs of Hydro and said to the chairperson of the OEB, "These plans and programs should be examined to determine whether they are effective and appropriate and to what extent they are meeting Ontario Hydro's demand management objectives."

The government will be continuing its examination to determine the factual basis upon which we can make some sound decisions in this province.

CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Mr Sterling: I have a question to the Minister of Correctional Services. Last Thursday, a 27-year-old Ottawa man was brutally beaten to death in the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Detention Centre. Mike Sienkiewicz was in jail for a breach of probation from a break-and-enter charge and conviction two years ago. He was scheduled to be released one week after his death.

Can the minister explain how a man with a record of a nonviolent crime ended up in a maximum security section of the Ottawa regional detention centre with other violent prisoners and unfortunately wound up dead while all of the guards apparently were on a coffee break?

Hon Mr Ramsay: I would rather not comment on this case, as it is before a police investigation and our own investigation at this time.

Mr Sterling: I would also like to ask the minister a question with regard to another facility. Again last Thursday, two 16-year-olds escaped from the Vanier Centre for Women and arrived on a Brampton man's doorstep. One of the escaped youths has been charged with the February slaying of a halfway house worker,

Krista Sepp. What are dangerous young offenders doing in a medium security facility where security is obviously inadequate?

These are two circumstances which arose on the same day. What corrective actions is the minister taking to secure people outside of the institutions, the general public, and what security measures and changes is he going to take with regard to the incident at the Ottawa-Carleton detention centre?

Hon Mr Ramsay: I would like to thank the member for the second question, his supplementary. All incidents that happen within our ministry are investigated by our ministry and the recommendations that possibly come out are put forward to our audit group and improvements come out of that process.

LUMBER INDUSTRY

Mr Faubert: My question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. Concerns have been raised lately about economic problems being experienced in some sectors in the north. In particular, the lumber industry has been hit hard. Companies such as Lévesque Lumber have been forced to close down and companies such as G. W. Martin Forest Products have had to lay off workers. Can the minister advise this House if this trend will continue or does he anticipate a change on the horizon?

Hon Mr Kwinter: There is no question that there has been some rationalization taking place in the north in the lumber industry, but I should tell members, and I am sure many of them know, that is certainly not an all-inclusive trend. We have had Boise Cascade Canada Ltd announce just recently a \$90-million addition to its operation in Fort Frances for its groundwood paper specialty mill. In total, it has had four projects that have put about \$300 million into the north.

So I think that although we will continue to experience some problems because of competitive forces and the nonproductivity of some of these mills, generally things have not been going quite that badly in the north in recent years. I think that the indication from companies such as Boise Cascade is that they still have confidence in the north and it will continue to progress.

Mr Faubert: By way of supplementary, members will be aware of the need for industries to increase their competitiveness. Can the minister advise this House how industry in northern Ontario can achieve this in the future?

Hon Mr Kwinter: Well, we have that problem. What we have to do is get them turned

around to the point where they are creating value added businesses. We are doing that through the Northern Ontario Development Corp and the technology fund. We have already put about \$10 million into it. We have companies such as Rexwood Products and Neelon Casting which are utilizing these particular programs, and they are really starting to progress.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr Wildman: I have a question to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Despite the importance of agriculture to Ontario's economy and the fact that farm debt has reached crisis proportions in this province, the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program is coming to an end at the very time the federal government is increasing interest rates.

Can the minister explain why there was no mention at all of agriculture in the recent throne speech? Why does his government give agriculture such a low priority? Why has the government not announced an interest rate reduction rate program for farmers as a successor to the OFFIRR program?

Hon Mr Riddell: As the honourable member knows, the throne speech set the framework for the government's agenda for this session and the programs of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food are consistent and supportive of the overall goal as announced in the throne speech.

There are three main points in the throne speech that apply to the agriculture and food industry: (1) economic development: pursuing new markets and supporting the growth of Ontario-based industries as they compete in the global economy; (2) promoting healthier lifestyles: the production of safe, quality food products is an essential element of the preventive health strategy; (3) leadership in environmental protection: we will continue to show leadership to ensure the quality of our air, water and food.

Now, Mr Speaker, you cannot tell me that there is no mention in the throne speech of agriculture and food when it fits into the framework as announced in the throne speech.

Mr Wildman: To follow the minister's logic, all of us eat and, therefore, we are involved in agriculture. Does the minister not agree that for every one per cent increase in the interest rates, we add about \$9.5 million to farm debt liabilities in this province? If that is the case, does he not recognize that like Quebec, Alberta and Saskatchewan, Ontario should have a substantial presence in the agriculture credit market and we

should be establishing a program as a successor to OFFIRR? When will he announce it?

Hon Mr Riddell: I have always contended that the responsibility for credit, whether it be long-term, intermediate or short-term credit, is that of the federal government. We were hoping that the Farm Credit Corp would come out with a brand-new face and that the federal government would face up to the real challenges that lie ahead of the farmers.

We have other programs in place that will assist the farmers in this province. We will continue to implement these programs and to come out with new initiatives, but still, again, it is the responsibility of the federal government, as far as I am concerned, to look after the credit needs of farmers.

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Hopefully, Mr Mazankowski will come out with a new face to the Farm Credit Corp which will address those needs. However, if interest rates continue to go up, commodity prices take a turn and come down and we are in the same situation as we were in the early 1980s, then I am going to have to look at what may need to be done at that time. We are not quite at that position yet.

TORONTO AREA TRANSPORTATION

Mr Cousens: I have a question for the Minister of Transportation. Last year, some 12 months ago, his ministry released this document, Transportation Directions for the Greater Toronto Area. One of the principles that he stated in that document was to reduce congestion in the short term.

In that year congestion became far worse in the greater Toronto area. More and more people are standing on GO trains, are crowded on the platforms and crowding into Toronto Transit Commission vehicles; and more and more people are finding the traffic on the Don Valley Parkway, the Gardiner Expressway, Highway 401 and all the routes coming in and out of Metropolitan Toronto more congested.

Inasmuch as one of the principles that the minister stated was that he was going to do something to reduce congestion in the short term, what has he done in the last year to reduce congestion in and around the greater Toronto area?

Hon Mr Fulton: I welcome my friend's question. He clearly is reading his preparation for question period and not taking a look at what is in fact going on out there. One of the difficulties is coping with the rapid growth of Toronto and the greater Toronto area which is often created

because of the very buoyant economy that this government has helped foster and maintain in this province.

The member will be aware of a number of transit improvements—some, by the way, were recently announced as starting in June and going up to Richmond Hill, which I believe is either part of or adjacent to his very riding, but perhaps he was aware of that—and there are many others.

The very significant increases in ridership with GO Transit, with the TTC and with other transit systems around the regions, indicate very strongly the efforts that we are putting forward to bring new riders on to transit operations and get them off the road where possible.

Mr Cousens: The greatest number of people who are coming in and out of Metropolitan Toronto are feeling that congestion. It is becoming far worse than anyone could have imagined even several years ago. It is obvious that the ministry has no plan, no vision at all and no investment. The minister did not even mention the whole subject in the speech from the throne.

The fact of the matter is that there needs to be something done to address the greater problems around Toronto that deal with the congestion of traffic and the movement of people. What does the ministry plan to do to start solving the problem instead of just dealing with the symptoms?

Hon Mr Fulton: I find the member's position here today in total contradiction to his statement in this House the other day, wherein he is opposed to the east Metro transportation corridor which is designed to help relieve Markham, his home and his riding, of some of the problems we have just identified.

Clearly he is not aware of the work that has been completed and continues on Highway 404, the work that is starting in June on Highway 401 to the collector system east, which will serve those people coming in from Markham. He is very much not aware of the many initiatives that have taken place both in rapid transit and in roadbuilding. I would offer him the opportunity of walking him through those documents.

Mr Cousens: Talk to the commuters, Ed. They are not very happy.

COLD FUSION

Mr Fleet: My question is for the Minister of Energy. He is undoubtedly aware of the recent rather controversial experiments conducted by Pons and Fleischmann in Utah, known as cold fusion. Cold fusion uses heavy water as a fuel to create, at room temperature and with a relatively

simple technology, a source of energy which is virtually waste-free. This has profound implications both for economical power generation and for a cleaner environment.

Are there any similar experiments being conducted in Ontario both to confirm the results of the Utah experiment and to ensure that Ontario will share in the benefits of this quite dramatic new advance?

Hon Mr Wong: First of all, I thank the honourable member for his question. I know the member for High Park-Swansea is very interested not only in energy but in the environmental aspects.

The prospect of cold fusion is indeed very exciting, as the member indicated it could be. There are experiments going on all over the world, and I am pleased to indicate that right here in downtown Toronto there happens to be one such experiment, which coincidentally is in my riding, the riding of Fort York.

The important thing here is that scientists from all over the world, whether they are particle physicists or electrochemists, are trying to determine, first, whether or not the fusion process is really at work here. That is one question that is being addressed in this particular experiment in Ontario.

A second question that has to be addressed is, will this be an environmentally benign potential source of energy? Third, of course, if it turns out that this does work, then people will be asking, what would the cost really be to put in a major power plant?

Mr Fleet: The prospect of an almost limitless, economical and environmentally safe source of energy is extremely tantalizing. Is there any reliable information at this stage which would indicate when and if cold fusion might be available to help all of us meet the energy needs here in Ontario?

Hon Mr Wong: I think the answer is that the scientific jury is still out. We do not have conclusive information or evidence yet that cold fusion does work.

I wish to answer the second part of the honourable member's question with respect to Ontario's future and indicate that we will be considering the total mix of supply and demand options and we will certainly be interested in the outcome of the research on cold fusion.

I can assure the honourable member that when the time comes we will be looking at all the options to make sure Ontario has reliable, safe and secure supplies of electricity and that,

wherever we produce it, our resources are used in an environmentally sound manner.

PROTECTION FOR HOME BUYERS

Mr Breagh: I have a question for the Minister of Housing concerning the preselling of some condominiums at a project in North York known as Concorde Place, located at Don Mills Road and Eglinton Avenue.

Can the minister explain why neither her ministry nor the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations has done anything for those people who, in good faith, thought they had finally found an affordable house in Metropolitan Toronto and had gone through the proper buying procedure, thought they had in fact bought a condominium in North York at a reasonable rate and found out that there was no condominium for them because the proper zoning had not yet been obtained? Can she explain to them why neither one of the two ministries nor this whole government could do anything to stop that ripoff of those people who thought they had finally bought their own home?

Hon Ms Hošek: I am, of course, very concerned about the fact that people do not have the kinds of choices to buy housing that they can afford that all of us would like them to have. But in the case that the member is talking about, the issue had to do with the municipality allowing the building to go forward. It is the municipality that made the decision that it was not prepared to create the conditions within which that building could go forward, and I believe the problem is really located there.

My concern, through the land use policy process we have initiated, is to make sure that municipalities do take some responsibility to make sure that in designated neighbourhoods and all over the entire new development process, housing that is affordable to people, lower-cost housing, housing that people can manage to buy, will be built in much greater quantity all over the province. That requires municipalities to designate the ways in which they are going to meet the affordability guideline of 25 per cent. We are beginning to make some progress in that in various municipalities in the province.

I am, of course, saddened for anyone who was in a position where they thought they had such housing, only to have that taken away from them by a decision of the municipality.

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Mr Breagh: It is fine for the minister to blame the municipality involved, but her ministry and the Ministry of Consumer and Commer-

cial Relations both were made aware that these units were presold and that there was not the required zoning already in place.

How does she explain to people that even though the Consumers' Association of Canada, for example, has made it clear that it does not believe preselling is a reasonable way to proceed with the development of these projects, her government sat around and allowed the practice to continue, did not even require the developer to tell people that the required zonings were not obtained yet, that in fact people were buying dreams that were nothing but pieces of paper? Her ministry was aware of it and she did nothing about it. How can she continue to make pious speeches about affordable housing and do nothing about these individuals?

Hon Ms Hošek: The member opposite is very knowledgeable about housing issues. He knows that the entire question of how condominiums are financed and how consumers are protected in this area is one of the areas the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations works on, but he should also know that the work of this ministry and the work of this province is much more specific than mere piety. He knows we have walked around this province and talked with the municipalities, including the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. Indeed, some of his friends have been present at some of those meetings; I believe he does have some friends.

He knows we have talked with mayors, with regional councils, and he knows very well that we have been working actively to increase the supply of lower-cost housing all over the province. That is the commitment we have made and have acted on and will continue to act on in a framework policy which will have an impact on all the housing that is built in the province.

As for the question of presold condominiums and the way in which consumers are treated, I would recommend that he talk to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr Wrye).

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mrs Cunningham: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. In his April newsletter, he stated, with respect to the Social Assistance Review Committee report Transitions, "A comprehensive consultation process, which included representatives from other levels of government as well as a number of interested agencies and to organizations, was completed at the end of February, and a response to those meetings will be forthcoming in the

spring in the government's budget announcement."

I would like to know specifically what groups, agencies and levels of government the minister has consulted with.

Hon Mr Sweeney: The honourable member will be aware of the fact that during the months of February and into early March I met with 16 provincial umbrella groups from all across Ontario, representing, I would suggest, by far the majority of groups on which this would impact either directly or through their clients; for example, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Ontario Federation of Labour, a number of church groups, the native chiefs' organization—the list goes on. I cannot take it all from memory, but I can certainly get it for the honourable member and I can get her the dates. I can also get her the messages they left with us. That was the one level in Ontario. Of course, we are getting all kinds of individual submissions from people across the province.

Second, I met with the directors of income maintenance from all the provinces of Canada. They, in turn, had a chance to look at this document before they came and I got some feedback from them. The general impression from them was that it was a good document, it was as good as anything they had seen anywhere and they were going back to their individual jurisdictions.

I have also met with two representatives from the Department of National Health and Welfare, also in the income maintenance branch, and got the same response from them. More recently, I had a chance to meet with the minister himself—

The Speaker: Order. I think that is enough response. There might be a supplementary out of that.

Mrs Cunningham: Of course, there is a supplementary out of that. I appreciate the minister's response and I now understand why there is some concern out there with the groups that are going to be responsible for the implementation of the Social Assistance Review Committee. It seems to me that, at this point in time, he just has not had the opportunity to meet with the municipalities.

I am now talking about the municipalities that will have to, in fact, implement very specific recommendations and with whom, I would expect, the minister would be consulting around the costing. I am now talking about shelter allowances, more benefits for children and very specific intricate parts for costing.

Would the minister please advise us as to when these municipalities can expect to hear from him and have input to the process, so that everyone will understand exactly how much money is involved?

Hon Mr Sweeney: I met specifically with the municipal organization in northwestern Ontario and the municipal organization in northeastern Ontario, as very distinct groups, and with the income maintenance subcommittee of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. As a matter of fact, the chairman of AMO, the mayor of Belleville I believe it is, was present at that meeting.

So we have met very specifically with the municipalities and shared with them some of the cost implications to which the honourable member has just referred. In addition to that, the honourable member will be aware of the fact that there is an ongoing meeting between staff of my ministry and a representative group of AMO, looking at a whole range of costing implications and program responsibility between the municipalities and the province.

The income maintenance program is part of that. There have been fairly significant detailed meetings between those two levels of government with respect to the Social Assistance Review Committee.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr Dietsch: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. On 24 January the minister introduced Bill 208, An Act to Amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Following the bill's introduction, several members of the business community expressed strong concerns with specific provisions of the bill, specifically the role of the new Occupational Health and Safety Agency.

I would like to ask the minister to explain why he feels this province is in need of such a body, given that the current system of occupational health and safety in Ontario is among the best in this country.

Hon Mr Sorbara: I think that is a very good question from the member for St. Catharines-Brock. I should point out, in a preliminary way, that there are two major themes found in Bill 208. The first, of course, is to enhance worker participation in the ongoing management of health and safety in workplaces all across the province.

The second, and equally important, is that the bill puts a very heavy emphasis on education and training for the workplace parties to ensure that

the internal responsibility system, which is the basis for the very good system we have in Ontario, is strengthened in order to ensure that we have a strong system of education and training in the area of occupational health and safety.

There are no people more effectively placed to develop that training system than the workplace parties themselves: employers, workers and their representatives, working together on a province-wide basis to develop the kind of training we need to ensure we continue to have a system that is second to none on the North American continent.

In order to do that, one needs an agency, a provincial body where employers' and workers' representatives can come together and develop just that sort of system.

Mr Dietsch: By way of supplementary, the minister seems to set out that this is going to be a co-ordinating function for this agency. What then can we expect the fate of the current safety associations to be following the development of this agency? Is this important, sector-by-sector approach to be maintained? What will the role be under the new system proposed under Bill 208?

Hon Mr Sorbara: My friend the member for St. Catharines-Brock refers obviously to the safety associations which are currently funded under the worker compensation system and under the authority of the Occupational Health and Safety Education Authority within the Workers' Compensation Board.

We felt it was inappropriate to have those associations work on the compensation side rather than on the regulatory side. Indeed, those associations, under the agency, will become front and centre in the development of training and education and the delivery of training and education under the work that the agency will do.

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Far from disappearing or taking a secondary role, I want to tell my friend that the safety associations like the Industrial Accident Prevention Association of Ontario, the Construction Safety Association of Ontario and the others will become key players in ensuring in Ontario that we are doing everything humanly possible to make sure we have minimized risk to life and limb in the workplace.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr Allen: I have a question to the Minister of Community and Social Services. He has just rehearsed for us some of the people and institutions whom he has consulted with respect

to the implementation of the Social Assistance Review Committee report, and yet those of us reading the throne speech see no reference to the Social Assistance Review Committee, no reference to Judge Thomson, no reference to Transitions.

We have a miscellaneous group of proposals. Apparently the ministry and the government have abandoned any comprehensive framework in order to implement social assistance reforms. Can the minister comment for us upon that obvious absence of a plan and framework? He was asked to provide, within six months, a comprehensive response, an indication of where the government was going with a view to SARC. He failed to do that. We now have the throne speech; no direction. What is going on?

The Speaker: Thank you. The question has been asked.

Hon Mr Sweeney: I remind my honourable friend that when George Thomson and his committee submitted their report to me and included in that a letter of transmittal, they said very clearly in the last paragraph of that letter of transmittal, if I can paraphrase, "We are handing this to you now and we trust that it will be helpful when you, as a ministry and as a government, move forward to make the changes that you feel are appropriate in the system."

I translate that clearly in saying that the committee says: "We have done our job. It is now up to you as a government to take our recommendations and design your system." I do not think the committee, at any time, expected that we would simply take its design and implement it from A to Z. Let me make that point very clear.

It is now our responsibility. It is no longer the Thomson structure or the Transitions structure or the SARC structure. It is the responsibility of this government and this ministry to implement a change, and we are going to do that.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon Mr Sweeney: That being said—

The Speaker: Thank you. Order. Perhaps the minister can continue after a supplementary.

Mr Allen: It is quite obvious that there is now no plan. There is now no design. There is a report out there that the minister has on a shelf somewhere, and that is the old story. What we have now are some miscellaneous proposals, for example, around a slogan of "welfare cheques to paycheques," and yet there is not even one single step in the proposals to make certain that the working poor in this province have the resources

to live on, so that when they move off welfare they will have a paycheque they can live on.

When is the minister going to complete the equation? When is he going to do something that makes some sense in terms of his responses for the slogan, let alone the large design of Thomson himself?

Hon Mr Sweeney: I would have imagined that the honourable member would realize he is being just a little bit premature. He realizes that the intent of the throne speech is to give a sense of direction, and that was clearly in the throne speech. If he looks at the particular references in the throne speech, he will notice that they were the heart and soul of the first phase of that.

The honourable member knows himself that even the recommendations in Thomson's report with respect to subsidization to the working poor were contained in phases 3 and 4, and he knows himself that they can only be carried out in consultation with the other level of government, and I have indicated that has already started.

I would tell the honourable member that when he hears the budget speech and when he hears my further extrapolation of that two or three days afterwards, he will see the structure that we are talking about. It is there.

PROPOSED NEUTRINO OBSERVATORY

Mr Harris: I have a question of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. On 26 January 1989, the Premier (Mr Peterson) was asked about his plans to fund the Sudbury neutrino project. At that time, to the amazement of the Canadian scientific community and to the amazement of the international scientific community, in spite of the fact that the Premier had signed correspondence back and forth on the project and in spite of the fact that he chairs the Premier's Council on technology, the Premier indicated that he was not even aware of the project.

I would ask the minister if the government has now done its homework and does this government plan to fund its small share of the Sudbury neutrino project?

Hon Mr Kwinter: For those members who are not aware of the issue, neutrinos are something that scientists find very interesting in that you cannot see them, you cannot measure them and you have to take them on faith.

Anyway, the way they want to do it is to use a mine shaft up in Sudbury, put heavy water in it and they feel that they can then see neutrinos as they go through. There is some controversy as to what the industrial spinoffs are going to be for

Sudbury. There is no question as to the scientific merit.

We are looking at it to see whether or not this is something that we, as a province, should be investing in. That decision has not yet been taken, but I can tell the honourable member that we are very, very actively looking at it. I have had several representations made to me by members of the local governments in Sudbury plus the scientific community. It is something we are looking at very carefully. We hope to make a decision relatively soon.

Mr Harris: Neutrinos are a lot like Liberals: you cannot see them or hear them, but something right back here lets you know they are around.

The Premier himself has been promising since 1985 to support and even fast-track scientific and technological projects that would put Ontario at the forefront. The Sudbury neutrino project has worldwide scientific recognition and support. It is especially important considering the recent developments in fusion experimentation. All funding is in place for this major initiative—federal, municipal, private and international. The only thing holding up the project is the Premier and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology.

The Speaker: The question?

Mr Harris: I would ask the minister why this government is indeed not leading the way instead of holding up this project and threatening by its delay the very fact that it is going to be able to go ahead at all?

Hon Mr Kwinter: I think members will find that the member for Nipissing (Mr Harris) may not be quite right about the federal funding for this project.

Second, I think he will find that the strategy of this government is to provide funding—that letter from the feds that the member is holding up is an expression of interest but no commitment. The situation is such that we want to make sure there is industrial spinoff. We have not been convinced to date that there will be any industrial spinoff. It will be an interesting experiment; it will get a great deal of credit in the scientific community; but whether it will really do anything for northern Ontario other than investing about \$7 million—

Mr Harris: We are excited about the spinoffs. That is what everybody is excited about.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Kwinter: But there are no spinoffs other than a scientific one, and that is why we are looking at it.

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INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

COURTS OF JUSTICE AMENDMENT ACT, 1989

Hon Mr Scott moved first reading of Bill 2, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, 1984.

Motion agreed to.

Hon Mr Scott: This and the following bill I will introduce are the bills I made reference to in statements in the House this afternoon.

COURT REFORM STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1989

Hon Mr Scott moved first reading of Bill 3, An Act to amend certain Statutes of Ontario consequent upon Amendments to the Courts of Justice Act, 1984.

Motion agreed to.

EDUCATION AMENDMENT ACT, 1989

Hon Mr Ward moved first reading of Bill 5, An Act to amend the Education Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon Mr Ward: This bill provides the minister with the power to make regulations to require boards of education to establish and operate programs in languages other than French and English.

SOUTH SIMCOE RAILWAY HERITAGE ACT, 1989

Mr McCague moved first reading of Bill Pr21, An Act respecting South Simcoe Railway Heritage Corporation.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Mr B. Rae: I very much appreciate the chance to lead off this debate on behalf of the official opposition. This of course not only gives me an opportunity to set out our criticisms of the government's plans and agenda, but also gives me an opportunity to set out the policies and views of the New Democratic Party and of the movement we represent across this province.

The period between our two sessions has been a time for reflection and activity on behalf of the

New Democratic Party. We have been very actively involved as a party in leading the fight to make Ontario a truly just and fair place.

I want to start by commending to the members of the House the example of my colleague the member for Hamilton West (Mr Allen) who walked and marched from Sudbury, Windsor and Ottawa, over 200 miles in the space of time, in a really historic effort to convince this government and indeed the whole people of the province that it was time for this province to come to terms with the inequality and the poverty in our midst.

It was also a chance for several of my colleagues and myself to travel to the far north of this province to several native communities. At the end of my remarks I will be reflecting on that trip and the impact it had personally on me and the impact it has had on our party and on the thinking of our caucus and party when it comes to discussing some of these broader issues.

It has also been a time for some intellectual reflection, a rather dangerous pastime for politicians and certainly for political leaders, but I will be speaking, again towards the end of my remarks, in a way that is perhaps a little more reflective than members are used to, on some of my views about the future of the democratic socialist movement in this province, because I think it is time for us to take stock about where we are going as a party in Ontario and about how we grow as a party in Ontario and how the Ontario social democratic movement has an historic role to play and how we can best play that role.

Mr Speaker, with your indulgence, I will spend some time in setting that out as a refreshing contrast to the views of the government that have been expressed very clearly by the Premier (Mr Peterson) in a number of speeches and indeed in the speech from the throne itself.

This throne speech gives us a chance to take stock. It is a little artificial, I must confess, having this discussion and this debate in the absence of a budget. Nevertheless, some economic and social realities of our province are clear enough.

I want to say by way of introduction that I find the structure of these debates a little artificial. You have a throne speech that sets out, allegedly, the plans of the government, but it does not set them out in any degree of clarity or particularity. It does not tell us exactly what they are going to do or how they are going to do it, and indeed does not tell us how they are going to pay for it. That is something we have to wait for in a budget.

I can say to you, Mr Speaker, that I find the whole notion of throne speeches that set out in

propagandistic terms the overall views and philosophy of the government—I must confess I find that exercise more than a trifle artificial, more than a trifle propagandistic because it has so little to do with the lives of people, and if I might say so it has so little to do with the work we actually engage in here.

We are now engaged in a general debate that will take several days and will give members an opportunity to speak out on issues that matter to them and to send those speeches to their constituents so they will know what their member is thinking and doing. I cannot help but think that in a modern, efficient government, our approach would be to say, “Let’s have a budget that sets out very clearly what the government is going to do and how it is going to pay for it, and let us focus our real attention in terms of debate in this chamber on how this government and this Legislature is going to deal with the problems of our time, with the challenges of Ontario.” That is the approach I will be taking.

Let us first of all consider the economic framework in which we find ourselves as a province. First, we have been the beneficiaries—none of us should forget this, certainly not the government—of an extraordinarily long economic recovery. It has lasted since the recession of 1981-82 and it is the longest and deepest recovery and period of economic growth since the Second World War.

I simply want to say that it is impossible to imagine the work or life of this government, indeed the political success of the Liberal Party since 1985, without understanding and appreciating that its entire structure is based on this period of boom that has been with us for so long.

More people are working in Ontario today than ever before in our history. The rate of participation by men and by women in the labour force is higher than it has ever been in our history. Jobs are not that well-paid in many instances. There are many workers who are forced to work part-time who would rather be working full-time, and that is a fact of life in Ontario. Nevertheless, it must be said that more people are working, more people are employed, and I might add more people are paying taxes and supplying that revenue to the provincial government than at any time in our history.

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Recent immigration into Ontario has been at an all-time high from other parts of Canada and from around the world, especially into the area now known in government parlance and in shorthand terms as the GTA, the greater Toronto

area, a term I dare say we will be hearing a lot more of in the days and months ahead. I cite these facts not because they are particularly startling or terribly novel or new, but because unless we understand some of this basic economic framework for the discussion today, we will not really understand how badly this government has been doing in handling the extraordinary advantages, if I may put it that way, the incredible windfall it has had since it took political office, first in 1985 and again in 1987. This boom, this economic wave, has carried the Peterson government with it.

I once heard the Premier say in a conversation at which I was present, “You know, since I’ve got here we’ve been rolling in money.” That was the classic expression, I might say, of Ontario corporate liberalism.

There they are, the members of the government, knowing full well in all their full complacency that all they had to do was basically sit on their duffs and count the money as it came in and, unimaginatively perhaps, raise taxes, the sales tax one year by one point or the income tax generally across the board, or make some adjustments here and there in terms of how much people would have to pay. Basically, they have seen the people of this province as a kind of cash cow they could milk steadily from year to year. They could simply live off that milk; indeed, off that cream.

Liberalism as it has been practised in this province—I am referring, of course, to liberalism with a very big L—is good at packaging. There is no denying that. It is good at presentation. The speech from the throne is a good example of that.

I think we can all imagine the discussions that took place in the Liberal Party after what was obviously a disastrous session last time, where it clearly lost its way and lost its direction. Even a phone call from Molson’s might have taken place. There might have been a phone call from Molson’s, an expression of nostalgia, just a way of keeping in touch, just to say hello, in which the conversation I would imagine in my mind would be: “How can we get this thing back on the rails? How can we convince the public and the media, indeed even the media, which either want or do not want to believe we really are in charge of things? How can we get on top of things?”

We have seen a couple of examples of what to do. We had the famous “L” speech in Boston, a tremendous place to talk about all the things the Liberal Party of Ontario wants to do. We had the speech to the Liberal convention in Hamilton, marred perhaps by the presence of some 23,000

teachers demonstrating against the Peterson government, but why let a few thousand teachers get in the way of the general expression of philosophy the Premier wanted to give?

We have the command of the art of rhetoric, something the rest of us are having to learn at this stage in our political careers, the meaningful visual, the subtle manipulation of opinion, the subtle manipulation of impression, the creation of an impression, the creation of a political artifice. This is what "Liberalism" is. This is what it stands for and this is what it has become so decidedly in this province.

I am not just saying this. I could quote editorials from virtually every newspaper across the province, which now recognize it.

The accord we signed with the Liberal Party in 1985 gave them the agenda, and that booming economy I talked about gave them the means and the ability to simply handle that agenda in the two-year period. But since 1987, when I think of this government I am reminded of nothing more than surfers on the waves of prosperity. I am reminded of those beach movies, *Endless Summer*—

Mr Reville: Surf City here we come.

Mr B. Rae: My colleague the member for Riverdale (Mr Reville) knows them all. I am having to go more by memory than he is. He takes them out at the video store regularly.

Mr Laughren: Where the Boys Are.

Mr B. Rae: Where the Boys Are. I think not of *Endless Summer*; I think of *Endless Slumber*. I think of the band I remember from my teenage days, Freddy and the Drifters; I think of David and the Drifters.

The Liberals had an image problem, but it was not an image problem that came from the sky; it was an image problem that came from the reality of a government that had no sense of direction, no sense of passion, no sense of priority and no sense of where it wanted to go.

I think I can say without giving away any confidences, and I can assure those people who have talked to me I will not be betraying them by name, that all of us on this side have been rather amazed in the last few months—I certainly have—by the sense one gets from talking to cabinet members, all of whom we know in this strange Titanic we call the Legislative Assembly—all of us know people we chat with and talk about—the sense of carping, the sense of criticism, the sense of wonder what the government was really all about, the sense that power has accumulated around the Premier's office in a way that members of the cabinet, loyal members of

the Liberal Party for years and years in opposition, long before the Red Sea parted, who were there for such a long time have a feeling of frustration that they really are not in a position where their views are taken seriously.

I can remember a function I attended where I sat next to a deputy minister of some considerable prominence. As the evening progressed, not early on but later on in the evening, he said to me in a mood of some openness, in a spirit of—

Mrs Grier: Conviviality.

Mr B. Rae:—true conviviality, which one sometimes takes on in these evenings—even I in my rather dour and puritanical way managed to enjoy myself as well—"You know what you guys are saying about these guys having no direction?" I said, "Yes, I do know what we're saying." I did not know what was coming next. I thought maybe he would say that was quite unfair or that the government really did have an agenda, that it was just it had not told us about it yet and when it did it would really be something. He said: "Well, you don't know the half of it. These guys don't have a clue what they're doing and where they're going."

Mr Callahan: He will soon be looking for a job.

Mr B. Rae: The member says he is looking for a job. I can assure the member from Brampton South that his secrets are safe with me. If there is a similar confession that seeks to come forward from this group, I will hear it without ever letting anyone know the source; the story yes, not the source.

We had that remarkable report from the management consultant for which thousands were paid; I do not know by whom. The consultant managed to get a number of confessions. They must have been in a confessional mood because a number of people said: "This government is adrift. All the power is centred in the Premier's office. They don't know where they're going." And of course, "Nothing's been the same since Hershell left." We all understand that and the sense of loss and the sense of directionlessness that is frequently there when the driver is not there, but there you are.

There are problems of prosperity we face in this province. There are also problems, and real problems, of poverty. There are what the Premier himself has described as sweet headaches and there are just plain old headaches. Let me list some of these, because I think in order to understand the inadequacy of this throne speech and how it really is simply another example of

Liberal packaging, one has to come to terms with the province in which we live, warts and all.

One has to come to terms with its good parts, which I tried to describe and will continue to describe in a very positive way because it is, when one thinks of it, an extraordinary place to live, a wonderful place to live.

But it is also a place that is our home and one we have a responsibility to improve and make a better place. With a boom, with this extraordinary expansion of economic growth, which we see visibly driving down, particularly in this city but indeed in many other cities as well: the incredible number of cranes and construction sites, the extraordinary opulence, the number of restaurants and fancy stores, the incredible number of Jaguars and BMWs that one sees on the street; all the very visible signs of a most extraordinary kind of affluence; the magazines that are distributed to many people's homes, that are contained in the *Globe and Mail*, the description of where you can travel, how you can spend your discretionary income; all the incredible accoutrements of this extraordinary affluence.

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We have as well the triumph of those who see the economy as a place to make a killing and not just to make a living. It is in that contrast that we see some of the beginning of the turning of the worm in the economic system in which we live. It is the extraordinary expansion, not simply of affluence but of quick-buck artists; the extraordinary expansion of speculation, pure and simple; the statement in all the forms of advertising which surround us, the appeals to greed, the appeals to pure and utter self-interest; the extraordinary attention and praise which our culture and the expressions of our culture give to those who are merely powerful, to those who are merely successful, to those who have achieved monopolies of land or monopolies of money, those who see government now as something to be manipulated and those who see politics as something to be bought.

These are hard words, but this is the Ontario in which we now live. Look at the fact that the whole region surrounding Metropolitan Toronto has been the area of the greatest growth in Canada and in fact one of the main areas of growth in all of North America. Think of how much power is now accumulating in the hands of three or four individuals and the hundreds of companies which they hold in various ways, shapes and forms. Think of the way in which

these people clearly see government as something which they can manipulate.

As we see this triumph of private power, of private corporate greed, think of what it means in terms of the growing imbalance between rich and poor, between the statistics, which I will not cite, because they are so overwhelming—I will simply say the evidence from Canada and the United States is quite astonishing. The evidence is parallel, and it is clear that since the early 1980s, and particularly in the last few years, there has been a growing disparity between rich and poor; there has been a redistribution of wealth away from lower- and middle-income people towards higher-income people, and that pattern has been reinforced by federal and provincial budgets.

In addition to that, there is a growing imbalance between regions. There are many members here who come into this community from outside Metropolitan Toronto. Metro Toronto has been my home since 1966, so I think of it as the city that is my home. As Leader of the Opposition, I have a chance to travel all around the province. The affluence which we see on these streets, on Bloor Street, on Yonge Street, is not shared. It is not typical of what is happening in Napanee or Kingston or Brockville or even Ottawa; it is not typical of what is happening in Pembroke or Renfrew; it is not typical of Sudbury; it is not typical entirely of Kitchener or of Cambridge, though there has been growth and booming times in these communities.

But there is surely something very wrong, simply in terms of the way the Ontario family sees itself and the way in which our economy functions, when so much power and so much activity and so much growth is in one area and hardly any is in some others. There will be many who will say: "What are you going to do? What kind of socialism are you going to impose on us?" I will be discussing those policies and what we can do, but I do want to say that we must find policies for development which share wealth equally throughout this province.

The absence of any discussion of the extraordinary regional imbalances and the extraordinary imbalances between rich and poor people in our society is an extraordinary absence in this document. I might add, as the leader of the party in Ontario—and the Premier will be very much aware of this—the fact that so much growth has been focused in Ontario, and in this part of Ontario, has created a resentment towards Toronto in other parts of Ontario and indeed in other parts of Canada. It is not a new phenomenon: Hogtown has been seen and known as

Hogtown for a long time. But this sense of resentment and of imbalance has got to be something that governments deal with and face up to.

We can only look at what has happened in Margaret Thatcher's England. Consider for a moment the home of Thatcherism. Anybody who travels to England, and I used to live there as a student and travelled widely around the country at that time—consider the incredible imbalance between what is happening in the London area and south of London and the whole masses of the area in northern England where there is unemployment at 10, 12, 15, 20, 25 per cent.

Whole cities have been basically devastated and allowed to collapse. We are now seeing in tragic terms the implications of that collapse in literal terms: the football stadia, railways and the basic infrastructure of Thatcherite England have collapsed, killing thousands of people. Let no one say there is no connection between Thatcherism, the failure to support public institutions and the public good and the failure to build up a sense of community right across that country, and the events that have taken place there.

But let's focus right here at home. The pressures on family have been extraordinary and, I think, increased by what this government has done. The debate that we had on Sunday shopping was not really a debate about blue laws or about what a 19th-century province should be like. In my view, the debate about Sunday shopping was about family, about pressures on the working family and about how much we wanted to do and could do for them.

The statistics are overpowering and the reality is overpowering: the number of women who are working part-time in low-paying jobs. Why? Because they have no other option. They would rather be working full-time. They would rather be working in a job that paid well, but the only jobs that are available are low-paying jobs with no pensions or benefits.

We have pressures on the working family when the parents are working 45, 50 and 55 hours a week. We have pressures on the working family when low pay becomes the order of the day, when there are literally hundreds of thousands of people who are living below the poverty line in this province—not because they are on welfare, and this is something we can get into when we talk about the implementation of the Thomson report.

Poverty is not a function simply of the welfare system, and dealing with poverty is not going to be handled by simply reforming the welfare

system. Poverty is a function of the economy in which we live; the structure is designed in such a way as to keep people poor. Let us be under no illusions about that.

Housing, shelter: a basic social right. What has happened to housing and shelter under the Liberal government? Well, I have some statistics, some very recent ones in terms of what has happened to housing prices: in Barrie, up 154 per cent since 1985; in Brantford, up 133 per cent since 1985; in Cambridge, up 125 per cent, and in Guelph, up 108 per cent. One could go on and on.

In Muskoka—I wonder why—we are not simply talking about housing, we are talking about cottages: 213 per cent in four years. The average for Ontario is 126.6 per cent. The average price of a home in Ontario in 1985, when this government took office, was \$85,000. The average price of a house today in Ontario, in March 1989, is \$192,000.

Nobody's income has gone up that much. Well, I should not say no one's income has gone up that much. Some people's income has gone up that much: executive pay, in some instances, has gone up that much. If we read the Financial Post and the Financial Times carefully, we will see how much executive pay and corporate pay has gone up. Perhaps members who reflect on their own situations might look more aggressively at that, because it is remarkable what has happened in executive pay since 1985. The average family, the average working family that we all know and see in our homes and see in our streets and talk to every day, does not have incomes that have gone up by 126 per cent in four years.

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When we have the average price of a home now in Toronto at \$277,000, when we have the average price of a home in Barrie at \$169,000, something has gone very wrong. There is something missing from the sense of purpose and direction in this province and there is certainly something missing when it comes to fairness.

We are seeing more and more signs of a breakdown in the infrastructure of this province, more and more signs of the inadequacy of roads, the inadequacy of sewers, the fact that things we previously took for granted are beginning to not work very well.

Earlier on, the member for Markham (Mr Cousens) expressed his concern about traffic. I suppose one would say that perhaps this is simply a fact of life and that we should be thinking about more elevated things than simply traffic in the

Legislature of Ontario, but it is an enormous problem.

There is a sense of an increasing unlivability about our urban life in particular, a sense that the communities are simply not as good, as rich, as warm, as livable as they once were. Certainly that is the sense that most people living in this city have, but I do not think it is confined only to this city.

We have some severe problems in the field of education. The Premier wants to be known as the education Premier, just as George Bush wants to be known as the education President, and as I watch the Premier, the parallels with Mr Bush grow and grow, although he has not even got 93 points of light over there.

Come on, laugh it up, guys.

[Laughter]

Mr B. Rae: That's better.

When we compare the deficit in supply with the growth in demand, my colleague the member for Scarborough West (Mr R. F. Johnston) has documented that we now have a net teacher shortage of nearly 6,000. This is a situation which we can document every day of the week by simply opening up the classifieds of our Globe and Mail or our Star and having a look at the number of boards of education that are advertising, not only all over Ontario but all over Canada, for teachers.

We have a crisis in our health care system. It is one that has been seen and felt by many of us in this House. It has been demonstrated again today by the questions that have been asked by my colleague the member for Riverdale on the survival of home care and home care services by the Victorian Order of Nurses. It is experienced by families who have to undergo delays of months and months waiting for important surgery that is not elective but in fact is necessary and required in order to protect their health.

This crisis in health care is also experienced—and I think this perhaps speaks as much as anything to the hypocrisy of this government, although it talks a good game about prevention and about wanting to get care into the community—by families who are faced with a terrible choice of how to care for loved ones when they do not have the means to care for them at home, when the cost of private nursing is literally tens of thousands of dollars a year for people to stay at home and to be nursed properly at home and when the only institutional choices that are available are a chronic care hospital, a nursing home or, in some instances, a rest home

of some kind, but the level of care in those institutions is simply appalling and inadequate.

We have this absurd situation where our nursing homes have over 30,000 beds, and we have the government's own report which says that thousands of those people should not be in those homes, do not need to be there and, in the best of all possible worlds, would not be there. We have hospitals that are filled to capacity with literally thousands of patients who have become chronic care patients and who have nowhere to go.

It has been my experience this last couple of years to spend a great deal of time in hospitals, and I must recount one experience I had. I went by a floor in Mount Sinai Hospital and there was a birthday party going on. Somebody recognized me going by and said, "Come on in, Bob." I went in and said congratulations on the birthday. One candle was on the birthday cake and I said, "What exactly are we celebrating?" The family said, "We're celebrating our mother's first year in the hospital and her first year waiting to get into a nursing home."

That is the absurdity of where we are right now in this province. The government's answer to this has been all the rhetoric about care at home and prevention. The minister gives speeches about how this has to happen. The reality is that we had a battle on the Red Cross when it came to providing homemaker services. The government was chintzy with them and was cheap with them and forced the Red Cross to get in here and canvass and lobby and spend its time, which could have been much better spent providing care in the community. They are doing the same thing with the Victorian Order of Nurses.

This is a government which says that home care is the issue. Let me say this: If home care is the issue, why are the VON and the Red Cross, hardly the most radical or fringe organizations—these are organizations that have been at the centre of providing care in this province since the 19th century—having to come to this government and beg for dollars in order to provide a vital and needed service? No explanation.

Finally, we have—and I think that as Canadians and as citizens of the globe we must see it as the fact that is now surrounding all the other facts, if you will—this environmental crisis which Ontario shares with every part of this Earth.

We have problems with the quality of our water. People say, "The drinking water is okay." I can remember, when the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley) was in opposition, that every time there was any question as to what

was in the water, he was saying, "If there's even one drop of any of these substances in the water, it's too much." Now he comes out and gives the same kind of bureaucratic baffle-gab and says, "Well, these are all now at safe levels." How do we know what is a safe level and when it will be a safe level?

We have problems with air quality. We have communities all over the province—Toronto last year—that are affected dramatically by the warming trends, that are affected dramatically by what happens when the air turns literally upside down for a period of time. We have become another Los Angeles in this part of the world. Let's not pretend that our situation is any better or different from the crisis they face.

This government continues to cut down trees and not replace them with the same impunity as the government of Brazil. They are no better. We all get worked up and excited—and we should—about the Brazilian rain forest, but what this government has done in Temagami is every bit as disgraceful as what is happening in the Amazon basin: every bit as bad, every bit as reactionary, every bit as short-sighted and every bit as much an attack on the environment, the quality of our life and the quality of our future.

On agriculture, where is the leadership of this government on something as basic as organic farming? Look at agriculture: when reading the Wall Street Journal or any publication at all, you will find people saying that there are millions to be made in organic farming.

Meryl Streep gives one press conference and it has, I am glad to say, more impact than one by the Minister of the Environment. She gives one press conference and suddenly the consciousness and awareness of people begin to change. People may say that is awfully flip, but it is a reality.

The reality is that we must learn how to grow and produce in this province without destroying the environment. We are not doing it and we are not doing it in a way that any aggressive, effective government could be doing and should be doing in this province.

On energy, my colleagues the member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr Charlton) and the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore (Mrs Grier) have expressed, I think as clearly as could possibly be expressed, what really is the agenda of this government.

I have a sense of a total charade. These guys know when and where they are going to go ahead with Darlington. Let's not fool ourselves. This is well into the planning process. These things have been discussed at cabinet, I am sure; they have

certainly been discussed in the ministry. The Premier is certainly involved up to his eyeballs, yet they will continue to say: "Nothing is final yet. No discussions have been held. We don't know exactly what's going to happen. We don't know when it's going."

1550

It is there. The reality is that this government has rejected the route of conservation. It has rejected the route of renewable energy. The Tories rejected it in their budget last week up in Ottawa, and this government has rejected it here, very clearly. Ontario Hydro has done what it has always done. The little barking dog, as we all know, that used to shout "off" has been eaten alive by the talking furnace.

Last month in my statement from my local hydro utility, I had a little leaflet telling me how I could use more energy. I had a leaflet telling me how I had to get out there—I could buy more; if I did not have an air-conditioner, I should certainly have one—and how I should be using more and more. Hydro has not changed, and if I may say so, Hydro will not change.

If you want to get serious about conservation, you establish a ministry with responsibility for conservation, you give the authority to deal with conservation to that ministry and you make conservation as economically attractive as you do building another nuclear reactor, which the majority of the people of this province do not want and should not have.

We still have not found a way, and I say this for the record, to dispose of the waste from the nuclear reactors that were built during the Davis government. Would the Premier tell me what kind of responsibility that is to future generations.

The speech last week on the federal budget, which we all listened to at various times—Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, its different appearances from time to time—talked about how we owe our children a debt-free future. More than anything else, we owe our children a pollution-free future. Would the Premier tell me what kind of responsible generation it is that says "We have no choice but to build another nuclear power plant" when it has not even now devised a way to handle the waste from the very first plant that was ever built in Ontario? I cannot imagine a more irresponsible thing for a government to do.

I know it will wash its hands and say, "That is a federal responsibility." Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd no doubt will be privatized as time unfolds and turned into some large Westinghouse-type utility, with the same record of responsibility as

Three Mile Island and the Shoreham nuclear plant, the one in Michigan that has cracks in it and all the rest of it.

Mr Wildman: They will run ads on TV for tritium for sale.

Mr B. Rae: They will be selling tritium and they will be trying to make money as best they can. They will turn around and say: "Don't worry. We have found the magic solution."

I think it is incredible and the height of irresponsibility on the part of this government to be proceeding as secretly, as privately and as irresponsibly as it has been with respect to this vital question, the future of our energy generation and the question of whether we should have or should get another Darlington nuclear station.

I just want to say to the government House leader, since he is here and his leader is not, we all remember. We remember before David and the Drifters took over. We remember the debates. The member for Kenora (Mr Micalash) is chuckling to himself. He missed the debates when the Liberals were in opposition. He has not seen this particular movie, so we have to describe it for him.

Mr Wildman: He was a Tory then.

Mr B. Rae: He probably had on a blue tie rather than a red tie in those days. There were certainly a lot of northerners who did. The member for Nipissing (Mr Harris) is laughing, but he knows what I am saying. I go to a chamber of commerce in northern Ontario, where I am frequently invited I might say, and I am always astonished at the number of red ties that I see. I say, "Didn't you fellows used to have blue ones?" They all chuckle and say, "Well, you know, that was in those days."

When the Leader of the Opposition's name was David Peterson, he made a commitment to the people of this province that Darlington 1 would never be built. He told the people in the province that Darlington 1 should never have been built, that it was a white elephant, that it was a waste of money, that Hydro was a multiheaded monster out of control. Now he is riding the tiger as Premier of the province, and I suspect, given the standards of political morality which we have come to associate with the Liberal Party of Ontario, he will be discussing it after the next election if, God forbid, he should win.

Garbage: Garbage is perhaps the way in which we bring the environmental crisis to home and to root. The government's pride is, of course, the blue boxes, which many of us have in front of our houses and many of us do not. I understand that

all of Scarborough, for example—the member is here—does not have a blue box yet.

Mr Faubert: None of us. Tell it to the city council.

Mr B. Rae: Tell it to the city council, that is right. But what started in Kitchener several years ago has now spread slowly throughout the province. But the Ministry of the Environment has no sense of how much could be recycled, how much is going into these dump sites and what exactly is going into them, what could be done with the material that is going into them and how to reduce the amount that is going in.

The state of Illinois has a law which requires every municipality to have a municipal composting facility which will take care of all the wet garbage that is produced by all the citizens of the municipality.

I know that this Premier likes to give speeches. He goes around in Boston or wherever it may be and says: "We've done more on acid rain than anywhere else in the history of civilization. We have the most progressive environmental record since Ghengis Khan." He goes on and on and on to describe what has happened.

Mr Wildman: World-class pollution.

Mr B. Rae: I am here to say it is not true. To suggest that Ontario is a leader in the environmental field when it comes to garbage and dealing with waste management is completely and utterly false. Ontario is behind. It is behind several states in the United States. It is behind many jurisdictions in western Europe where the level of recycling is, in some cases, well over 50 per cent now and they are aiming for 75 and 80 per cent in the next five years.

What is the timetable of the Minister of the Environment? The very best he can do, not for recycling but for diverting away from a dump site, is 50 per cent by the year 2000. What does that mean? I will tell members what it means.

Interjection.

Mr B. Rae: The member for Kitchener (Mr D. R. Cooke) is happy with that, but I will tell him what it means. It means this government thinks incineration is okay. It means this government has bought the argument that somehow if you build these huge recovery facilities you are really doing the job; when most people in the environmental field feel that that is simply going to mean the generation of more garbage, in order to feed these huge institutions and these huge facilities which will be built up.

The member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr D. S. Cooke) and I took a very interesting trip just two

weeks ago looking at garbage, at the communities around Windsor and the tragedy they now face in dealing with this issue. This is a very practical and real problem.

There are literally thousands of tons of garbage dumped in landfill sites which should now be recycled, which could be recycled and which are not being recycled.

I am not suggesting for a moment that Ontario's problems are unique and I am not suggesting that all of them are the fault of any government. I think there is a certain unreality to many of our discussions and many of the debates which we have in this House, when the sense is that everything that happens is somehow the fault of the government and that no government can be held responsible for them.

It is not the problems that are always the fault of the government, it is how governments deal with them. That is what I want to turn to in a moment. I want to turn to one issue which I touched on in our emergency debate on Wednesday and I want to repeat some comments I made at that time.

There are some problems which are the fault of the government, just some. Here is one: car insurance. If there was ever an example of a field in which the government has had a mandate from the people of this province to get on with it, to take over that industry and to provide a comprehensive plan that is affordable, that is doable, that gives drivers some control over their own lives and does not leave them at the mercy of the insurance industry, it is the car insurance issue.

They have blown it. They had that issue. They have been sitting on it for four years and every step of the way they have blown it at the expense of drivers. There are drivers who are paying \$200, \$300 and \$400 a year more than they need to, have to or should be paying, simply because of the incompetence and the wilful mismanagement of the Peterson government when it comes to car insurance. That is why; not because people say, "It's the industry" and blah, blah, blah.

We will go through this. We will take it time and time again and show them as clearly as we possibly can. There is no question at all that if this government had wanted to show some leadership, it could have. It had a mandate to do it. It had the will of the people behind it to do it and it did not do it.

1600

Let us look then, if we can, at the throne speech itself. I spent some time in building up to it because, frankly, when one gets there, there is

so little there. I referred on opening day to the throne speech as not simply a matter of checking against delivery, which is what we asked people to do in the last session, but a matter now of checking against reality.

Perhaps another way of saying this would be to say that what the Liberals are asking us to do is play the game which my kids play, and which many kids play, which is called "Let's pretend." What is the Liberal version of "Let's pretend"? Listen to the six priorities.

When it comes to the economy, they say, "Let's pretend that we can discuss the economy as if the federal budget did not exist." When it comes to education, they say, "Let's pretend we can discuss education as if the province did not have to pay for it." When it comes to social assistance, as my colleague the member for Hamilton West demonstrated today in his questions, "Let's discuss social assistance as if the Thomson commission had not recommended a complete overhaul and as if that did not exist."

When it comes to policing and race relations, "Let's pretend as if employment equity was not a commitment going back to 1985 by this Liberal government; and let's pretend as if there was not a crisis affecting our native people," because the words "native people" and what is happening to our native people do not appear once in the throne speech.

When it comes to the environment, "Let's pretend as if a lottery could possibly be a substitute for the principle of the polluter pays." When I see the Minister of the Environment—and we have already joked about Scratch and Sniff and it is a crap shoot and so on—I am reminded of the words of Fawn Hall, who was quoted as saying, in a very determined way—

An hon member: What are you reading?

Mr B. Rae: I wrote this myself. She said, in a very determined way—

Interjections.

Mr B. Rae: I know Liberals find it hard to believe that leaders can actually write their own speeches. It is very difficult for them to grasp.

Fawn Hall is widely quoted as saying, "I am not a bimbo."

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr B. Rae: "I am not a bimbo." That is b-i-m-b-e-a-u, I think. When I see the minister, I think of him saying, "I am not a bingo king." That is what this government has become. Bingo now is the answer. "Farmer Brownie had a dog

and Bingo was his name." That is the name. That is the name: Bingo Bradley.

It will be Bingo Bradley from now on. Every time we want to establish the principle that the polluter should pay, the minister will say, "We will run a bingo for that" or "We will have a lottery for that," or maybe we will play a poker game or another game of chance.

When this government was elected, it was supposed to be Mr Clean, not Mr Cleantario, not the lottery man, not the bingo man. We did not elect Bingo Bradley. We elected a Liberal government that was supposed to establish the principle that the polluter should pay. That was supposed to be the principle.

Bingo Bradley was down in Ottawa with Mr Bouchard. All the leaders were there together and they signed a solemn declaration. The ministers of the environment from all over Canada and the new federal Minister of the Environment signed the declaration that the polluter should pay. The Minister of the Environment's contribution is to come back and say, "Well, that is all very well for the feds, but when it comes to Ontario we will run a bingo."

I think, again, it is one of these things that one can only guess about. I do not know whether that was Hershell or perhaps it was the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr Kerrio). I do not know. It would be unfair to establish authorship. The Minister of Natural Resources is holding his hands up as if to say, "It wasn't me."

The face of the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) the other day was really quite a sight as this was read out by His Honour the Lieutenant Governor. He looked at me and he just said, "Did we really say that?" Just that sort of sense of honesty and spontaneity for which the Treasurer is so famous.

I really think the Liberal Party has got it wrong. I really think the Liberal Party has misread the public mood and has underestimated more badly than that the seriousness with which the citizens of this province now take this question of environmental pollution. I think they have badly misunderstood that the citizens of Ontario are way ahead of their governments. They are ahead of their municipal governments; they are ahead of their provincial government; they are ahead of their federal government. They do not want to have poisoned water and poisoned air and they want polluters to pay for the pollution that they make and that they produce. That is what they want.

When it comes to health care, the sixth item, "Let's pretend there is not a nursing shortage." Imagine having a statement about health care in

the speech from the throne that did not talk about the fact that there is a nursing shortage, a crisis in urgent care and now, as I have said already, a deep and profound crisis in home care.

The question then becomes—which one would hear from any decent heckler—"Well, what would you do?"

Mr Breaugh: It's so bad in here we have to write the lines for the hecklers.

Mr B. Rae: Those guys are getting really slow.

As one would say, what is then to be done? What is there that we would do as a party?

I must say that again, as I have reflected a bit on why politics has a bad name in people's minds and why politicians are held in low repute, something which I am frankly concerned about—obviously, I have a stake in my kids not thinking I am some kind of a criminal—I sense an obligation on our part, and I would encourage the third party to do the same. I will have some words to say about the third party in a moment. The first is that we have a special obligation to set out, for our own part, what would we do and what needs to be done and how would we do it?

I want to go over some of that in light of, frankly, the federal budget last week, which is going to have an impact on politics in this province and on actions and activities of the provincial government and is something we have to contend with as well.

The first thing that must be done is that we must, all of us, as a foundation of basic social and economic justice, commit ourselves to being willing to pay for the common interest and the public good.

I think there is a fundamental dishonesty about taxes and discussion on taxation in our political discourse. It is incredible to me, truly incredible, that an entire federal election was fought just a few short months ago without anyone ever mentioning or discussing either the size of the deficit or the fact that taxes were going to be raised. You might say that is what one expects from politicians or what one expects from political coinage, but I say when a Minister of Finance and when a Prime Minister—and I hold the Prime Minister personally responsible for this, as a Canadian citizen—carries through an entire election campaign failing to mention once how taxes had to be raised, failing to mention once what he felt about the deficit and why he felt it was a critical problem, I say we have reached a new level of political dishonesty in this country and that is a fact that we have to contend with.

When it comes to what one would do, perhaps one could just sort of look at who were the winners and losers in the last federal budget. The day after the budget came down, bank shares went up. Why did bank shares go up?

Mr Pouliot: Because no taxes on assets were announced.

Mr B. Rae: My colleague the member for Lake Nipigon, who follows the stock market very closely, confirms what I have just said and therefore I know it is true that bank stocks did in fact go up, and I know that—what is the name of our conscience?—Judge Evans will be hearing about that. I am in trouble now.

There is a reason that bank stocks went up. They went up for one simple reason: because the banks got a windfall from the Mulroney government because a tax which was widely anticipated, and if members read—as I have to do, not because I get a thrill out of it but because it is part of my job—the *Financial Times* of Canada and the *Financial Post* on Friday and Saturday you find everybody recommending buying bank stocks. I was coming here today and somebody gave me a copy of the Burns Fry report following the budget. Burns Fry was out saying, “The budget is good news for banks and a good buy.”

1610

Let me tell members something: A budget that is good news for banks and bad news for people is a budget that is bad news for the people of Ontario. This government is going to have to do something about it in its next budget, because if it does not deal with this tax unfairness question, if it does not deal with the fact that there are still thousands of corporations that do not pay any tax, that thanks to the capital gains giveaway in Ottawa there are people who can make \$100,000 in a single hour and not pay any tax, yet we have people who are now being asked to pay \$1,000, \$1,200 or \$1,500 more over the next couple of years out of their pay packet, out of their pay.

It is unacceptable to us that we would have a system of taxation as unfair and as unjust as we have. We must state clearly and categorically that everybody in this province has to pay his way and pay his share and we will no longer tolerate the kind of tax unfairness which we have associated with the Liberal government for so long. This dishonesty is carried over in the throne speech because it says in so many places, “If we get the money from the feds, we will do this and we will do that.”

I heard the Treasurer on the radio the day after the budget. He was condemning Mr Wilson because he has cut his transfers without any

notice and without any warning. In fact, the transfers have not actually been cut. The level of growth has simply been reduced, and it was guaranteed that they will never be lower than the rate of inflation.

The day that I heard the Treasurer say that, I was on my way to Sarnia to speak to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. I relayed to them the Treasurer's very strong condemnation of any government which would unilaterally cut its transfer payments without so much as a warning or a boo. These were mayors and financial officers of our large municipalities who had been told by the government, not that their increases would simply be that of inflation, but no, that there would be no increase, that they were frozen.

Then they were told, “Imagine if the federal government unilaterally transferred jurisdiction for some kind of security activity or whatever it might be to the provincial government and said, ‘Here, you pay for it.’ Imagine the reaction that would come.”

Mr D. R. Cooke: You can't do that.

Mr B. Rae: The member says as a legal matter they cannot do that. Well, it is a good thing for him that they cannot, because that is exactly what his government has done to the municipalities. If the Tories cannot do it in Ottawa, this government should not be able to do it here in Ontario either and it should not have the gall to turn around and say to the federal government, “What you're doing on transfers is ridiculous.”

What they are doing on transfers is nothing compared to what this government is doing on transfers, nothing compared to what the Liberal Party is doing to transfers and nothing compared to what this government is forcing municipalities to do when it comes to property taxes.

That is the dishonesty of this government; it really is. There is an intellectual dishonesty that is there, that is deep and profound. The Mulroney government was not elected on the slogan, “Pay more and get less,” but neither was the Peterson government elected on that slogan. If the Premier is going to be saying to the people of this province that they will pay more and get less, which is the message of this Treasurer, then I think he is asking for it.

What then do we do next, having stated that our policies cannot be based on a mindless opposition to taxes, but on a simple determination that those with wealth and power must pay their share and that we all owe it to ourselves to pay something? We must recognize that the best of all possible worlds would be the world of

Oliver Wendell Holmes, whom I always like to quote, when he said, "Whenever I pay my taxes, I like to think I am buying a piece of civilization."

Oliver Wendell Holmes was an American, and I do not know whether he was a Liberal, a Conservative, a Republican or a Democrat, but I do know that he was a very fine judge and that he stated a very fine and basic point. Whenever we pay taxes, we do like to feel we are buying a piece of civilization.

I only wish the banks and the trust companies, the financial institutions and the insurance companies wanted to buy a little bit of civilization as well. We would all be better off if they did. Our kids would be better off. The deficit which is now apparently hanging around our necks for years and years to come would be reduced and we would all be in a better position.

The next question then becomes, "What else would you do about the economy?" I think the fundamental point must be made, and I know my colleague the member for Nickel Belt (Mr Laughren) will be discussing these questions in the months ahead, that we must make the forces of capital respond to the needs of a modern democracy. That is the foundation of the philosophy of my party when it comes to the economy, and I will be talking more about that in a moment.

It means that in the field of pensions, we insist—yes, for teachers, yes, for civil servants, and yes, for every single worker in this province—on the right to an equal say in the control of a plan, the right not to be taken for granted. Why were 23,000 teachers out? Because they did not want to have money taken out of their pockets without any control over what is being done with that money, for the simple reason—

Interjections.

Mr B. Rae: There is a principle here. If my friends fail to understand this, they will fail to understand the anger that is out there and that is very real and very deep. They will also fail to deliver on their promise, which they made as a political party in 1985, that they would ensure that pensions were going to be indexed and that people would not be taken advantage of when they contributed to a pension plan.

I look at the number of people who do not have a pension. I look at the fact that the pension system has not been revised. I look at the fact that the Premier at his press conference last week was not able to promise that the pension legislation would be forthcoming. It was something he was not able to make any commitment on.

I think it is very clear: When it comes to dealing with the forces of capital in our society—and this is a very important point, because it speaks to the foundation of what it means to be a Liberal—the Liberal government simply lies down, rolls over and does not transfer power from corporations to people, does not transfer power from élites to people. It sides with the élites every single step of the way. That is the reality of what modern Liberalism in this province has become.

Mr Wildman: Go with the winners.

Mr B. Rae: As my friend the member for Algoma, who is a very helpful heckler, points out, "Go with the winners." That is exactly the philosophy.

Read the Premier's Council report. What do we see there? The industrial strategy consists of picking out a few winners and going with them. The Premier's Council on the economy has produced, as far as one can see, very little in terms of concrete action, very little in terms of real government policy and certainly very little in terms of its integration into the work of the ministries of the government.

I think one has to simply look, for example, at a report which I did not write, which was written by Mr de Grandpré. I do not agree with Mr de Grandpré's solutions, but what does Mr de Grandpré find about the situation with respect to training in Canada? He finds that for 1987 the private sector in Canada, including Ontario, spent on training and retraining—how much do you think the private sector spent per worker? I will tell you, Mr Speaker: \$100.

Mr Laughren: Bugger all.

Mr B. Rae: As my friend the member for Nickel Belt says, "Bugger all." I could not have said it better myself.

That is the investment by the corporate sector in people: \$100 per worker. That is the investment by the corporate sector in seeing that employees are able to handle and deal with change.

What do we have from this government that has changed structurally since 1985? Nada. Not a thing. Nothing. Apprenticeship programs have not changed. Nothing has changed. They state in the throne speech how this is something they want to do, but they do not tell us how it going to be paid for. They do not tell us what kind of programs; they do not tell us whether they are going to be controlled by workers or by companies; they do not tell us anything that is real in terms of how we would deal with this issue.

1620

Finally, Mr Speaker—not finally, but I want to say that when it comes to the environment; I know you will be disappointed, but this is my one shot here and I enjoy speaking on the throne speech debate, so I will take a little longer. We will all be going home afterwards and there will be lots of time.

I referred earlier, when it comes to the environment, to the fact that we are now in the middle of a sea change in public values when it comes to the environment. I think all of us have to come to terms with this. I can speak personally and say that I myself have changed in my own view in terms of how serious a problem and a priority this is.

I think that if one looked 10 years ago, it was an area where all of us felt that more needed to be done, but I do not think any of us expected to see the day when even cool and rational scientists meeting in conferences sponsored by the United Nations around the world are talking bluntly to all of us about the impact of our poisoning our air and our water, contaminating the food we eat, talking about the impact of the global warming trend. "It will threaten our forests of spruce and jackpine just as surely as clear-cutting, budworm and forest fires."

I do not see a recognition from this government that that is a reality, and I think our whole public philosophy has to change, our entire public philosophy has to change, to meet the environmental crisis. We must not simply all become environmentalists, but we have to see that the environment gets priority, not simply from the Minister of the Environment but from the Minister of Natural Resources, the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr Riddell), the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr Kwinter), from every single company doing business and yes, from every citizen of this province.

If any of us are polluters, we must stop. I go back to my point: Surely we have reached the stage now where polluters must pay. What has been the one example—

Mr Haggerty: Ban all cars.

Mr B. Rae: The member for Erie—

Mr Haggerty: Niagara South.

Mr B. Rae: —the member for Niagara South; I think of him as being the member for Erie. I always enjoy hearing his comments, often made from his seat. A good heckler; a valued member, certainly of our team. We had the member for Leeds-Grenville (Mr Runciman) last week, the

member for Niagara South this week. We extend from one branch of Social Credit to the other.

The member for Niagara South says, "Ban all cars." Let us look seriously, not at simply banning all cars tomorrow but at the impact that emissions are having. Let us recognize not only that the lead in our air but the toxic cloud which now encircles the globe and encapsulates our air are in good measure a function of the fact that the car and the combustible engine and gasoline have achieved the role of predominance that they have. Should we be doing something about that? Yes, we should. Can we afford to ignore it? No, we cannot. Is it going to cost us? Yes, it is. Is there any getting around it? I do not think so.

Again, if I can speak bluntly about costs, we must all speak very directly to our fellow citizens about the fact that this is going to cost us, because unless we are prepared to spend the money now, we can be sure the environment our children receive will be much poorer than the one our parents left us.

An hon member: We will get a bingo.

Mr B. Rae: Yes, we will get a bingo; exactly.

I could speak on many other subjects. I could speak about where we would go on social programs; the failure of this government to move on Bill 208; the fact that on health and safety in the workplace, the government failed in the throne speech to make any statement about what it would do to protect the environment of workers inside as well as outside the plant.

I could speak about the fact that when it comes to expanding social programs—and I include here the cutbacks in workers' compensation represented by Bill 162—I say to this government that as long as it is paralysed by the force of the new right in our province and in our country, as long as it believes and shares the view, which is certainly now widely shared among provincial governments in Canada and our federal government, that there can be no new social program and that there is no way that the work of government can extend into new areas, that the idea of a creative government which will build new programs is unheard of and impossible, that in fact the public sector must be cut back and cut away in every way, shape and form, as expressed in the philosophy of free trade, we are always going to be left with government as watchman, government as security guard, government as the policeman in the night, but not government as a force for social change and for social good.

As long as that philosophy paralyzes Liberal governments and Tory governments, then nothing of significance in social policy either can or

will happen, and so I am saying to my colleagues in the New Democratic Party in this province that it is our special obligation to take on the force of those who say that the work of government should be cut away and diminished and hacked away, that there is no room for creativity in the creation of new social programs.

I know my constituents would benefit directly from new programs in housing; they would benefit directly from new programs in income support; they would benefit directly from child care as a basic right; they would benefit directly from a universal sickness and accident insurance plan, and we are going to fight those who will resist those changes.

If we, as a party, were to say, "Well, we accept this view now that the role of government is to be cramped and confined and limited for all time, that in fact revenues going to governments are limited for all time"; if we bought the view which is being put forward by the third party and which is being put forward by Conservative parties all around the world that there is a universal problem of overtaxation when it comes to what people are paying and that in fact there is no way governments can do the work they are doing, we might as well pack up and go home, because there will be no room for social innovation.

We have to deal head-on with this question of tax justice. We have to deal head-on with the fact that Michael Wilson's definition of tax justice—and that is the new Tory definition, and I say a Tory is a Tory is a Tory and we know what the Tory version of tax reform is. The Tory version of tax reform is tax the poor, tax the weak, tax all the people who go out to buy anything any time they buy it, whether they have the income or not, and let the banks and the corporations off practically scot-free. That is the Tory message on tax reform and that is the Tory message that we reject, but let's wait and see.

Mr Black: First time you've been right all day.

Mr B. Rae: I hear the member for Muskoka-Georgian Bay shouting out, saying in his dulcet tones, perhaps stepping down temporarily from his role as a critical, crucial private adviser to the Premier on many important social programs, that is the first time I have been right all day. Let me tell my friend from Muskoka, I hope he is up on his feet condemning the Treasurer the day after the budget when he does to the people of Ontario exactly what Michael Wilson has done to the people of Canada, because that is what is going to happen.

We are going to have the same pattern, and the people of Canada and the people of Ontario are going to see that when Liberals are in power they do exactly the same thing as Tories; when Tories are in power they do exactly the same thing as Liberals when it comes to taxation. They tax the poor, they tax the weak, they tax the middle income, they tax sales, they tax people who go shopping; they do not tax the people who have the money, who make the money on Bay Street, who make the money downtown, who make the money on speculation. Those are the people who get off and those are the people who are not taxed, and we pay the price.

My constituents pay the price for this government's lack of courage when it comes to a speculation tax. They pay in two ways, and I will tell members exactly how they pay: They pay because their taxes are higher because this government is not prepared to impose a speculation tax; they pay because the price of housing goes up because they are not prepared to take that money out of the economy with a speculation tax, and they pay because the lack of a speculation tax weakens the public purse and diminishes the quality of public programs and makes it impossible for them to get the good things in life.

Public programs have made enormous differences to my constituents, whether it is parks or whether it is schools, whether it is pensions or whether it is workers' compensation, even in its inadequate form. If we did not have a minimum of social programs for our people, they would not be as well off as they are.

I say that an expansion of social programs, funded by a fair tax system, by a just and vibrant economy in which workers have some control over their lives, is a program which makes sense for the vast majority of the people of this province, and these are the people we are fighting for.

1630

Not too long ago, my colleagues and I had occasion to go to a very different part of the province from the one in which I live, a very different world. I want to spend a few moments, if I may, to talk about that.

To travel north to James Bay is to meet several uncomfortable truths about ourselves, truths about Ontario, truths about Canada. Up the coast from the Quebec border to the point where James Bay meets Hudson Bay are nestled five communities: Moosenee, Moose Factory, Fort Albany, Kashechewan and Attawapiskat. Each is very different, with its own unique character, but all

share a common reality: a profound and systematic poverty, a powerlessness that is rooted in the encounter between Europeans and our first Canadians.

It is a two-and-a-half-hour flight, but it is a trip to a very different world. Of the communities we visited, I can tell my friends that only Moosenee and part of Moose Factory have running water and sewage treatment. In the other communities, these advantages are exclusively confined to those buildings where non-native whites live and work.

To take that trip is to visit a colonial world, where the native people have their own language—Cree—their own culture, their own way of life, and yet are effectively ruled by a white, alien authority. The meaning of the phrase “self-government” suddenly became very clear, and its historic parallels with the demands of other colonized peoples around the world are immediate and visceral and real.

It is not just the overwhelming poverty, though I think I would share with my friends the feeling that this is certainly the first thing that hits one. It is reflected as well in something as absurd as the physical layout of a town like Fort Albany, where all the white institutions are on a hill, across the Albany River from where the natives live. When the ice breaks up, as I would imagine it is breaking up right now, people are flown across the river in a helicopter if they need medical help.

There are many moods and we encountered those moods as we talked, often late into the night: resignation, frustration, anger, but above all a sense of separateness, a sense that survival and integrity are about keeping distance. I was told that I was the first leader of a party to stay overnight in each of the communities we visited. I found that hard to believe, but I am sure it was true. It then became clear that politicians come and go; bureaucrats come and go; plans are made and plans are unmade. Negotiations are literally endless. No government is really interested in settling anything. There is no requirement other than that of vague conscience, that government should.

I would say that for all the progressive intentions of the Attorney General (Mr Scott), he has not achieved anything with respect to this question of native self-government or with respect to any negotiation of any claim in this province. The courts, which people are told are supposed to be the halls of justice in this province, are hideously expensive, and as the people of Temagami have learned not particularly receptive. Without these courts and without

good legal decisions, there is at this stage no forcing governments to do the right thing, apart from the kind of actions we have seen over the last few weeks.

What we are talking about here is racism. I say that word not at all lightly; I say it meaning it fully and completely because as I have reflected on what I saw, I have had to ask myself this question: In what other Ontario communities would we accept thousands, whole communities, doing without basic sewage treatment and running water? Think about it for a moment. To say, “Well, that’s a federal matter,” misses the point entirely.

Let me put it to the members another way: If Ontario goes in, as it has done, and builds a small hospital—in fact, it has built two of almost the same design in two communities, one in Attawapiskat and one in Fort Albany—then it builds a nurses’ residence, which it has done, and it supplies them with running water and sewage treatment; does that not raise the issue of why white civil servants are getting this and no one else in the community? I think it does. Is this really the kind of apartheid—that is what it is—we want to practise in this province? I cannot imagine that it really is.

In his book *The Affluent Society*, J. K. Galbraith talks about private affluence and public squalor. When you go north, you face the opposite. Wealth is associated with the government, with public money. With the exception of the Hudson’s Bay store and the local priest or minister, the white establishment is exclusively the government establishment.

What are some conclusions we can draw? The first is fundamental. I really believe this, and I believe it more strongly and personally than I have believed it before: Canadians, Ontarians, we must come to terms with our own collective past, with our own unique history. We are not alone in having to do this. We share this with every settler culture, and there are many settler cultures around the world. We share with all of them the compelling need to accept the claim, rights, history, personality, and yes nationhood, of those who were here before European settlement.

Surely, this is our greatest unfinished business as a country, this continuing refusal to come to terms with the hard fact that there are several hundreds of thousands of native people whose ties to land and tradition date back thousands of years, and yet whose claims to self-government and autonomous power and authority have been either ignored or denied.

I know people say, "What does it mean?" of the phrase "self-government." You listen to Premier Devine at a premiers' conference and he says, "What do you mean by it?" Let me give a very specific example, and members can identify with this because it is something we all have to contend with in our own communities.

My colleagues and I went up to discuss health care, and health care is a good example. None of the institutions we visited was accountable in any serious way, in other than a token way, to the majority people who lived and worked in these communities. All the bands and the elders we talked with saw health as an important right, but they had almost no access to the decisions about where dollars would be spent, what would be given priority or how the system would work.

This was true regardless of the issue; whether it was chronic care, which the native people resent having to pay for since they regard free medical care as a basic treaty right as well as a right of citizenship in Canada; user fees; diabetes—we discovered there was an alarming incidence of diabetes on every reserve we visited—ambulances, which I discussed in the House with the minister; travel; birthing; you name it. There is no control and yet control there must be. It is an immediate and practical way to start.

Let me give one practical example to extend this. Unlike virtually every other community in the province, the birth rate on reserves in northern Ontario, I can tell members, is literally exploding. This is what gives the unique dynamic to the debate about native education. We visited a community whose school was shut down, which meant there were literally hundreds of kids who were roaming around, with nothing at all to do, for days. It also poses some enormous questions about how health care is delivered.

Let me tell you this story: In a community such as Attawapiskat which has a shiny new hospital—but no doctor, so you have nurses who are there—the policy of the government of Ontario and the government of Canada is that if you are going to have a baby, you cannot have it in the community where you live, with a midwife or however. Progress now means that you get into a plane at the 36th or 37th week of pregnancy, regardless of whether it seems to be a high-risk pregnancy, and you are flown out to the hospital in Moose Factory by helicopter. You stay there until you have your baby and stay for a week or so afterwards and then you are flown back.

That may sound, to some people, like a wonderful system. To me, it sounds like absolute

lunacy. Here we have a situation where young women who frequently have two, three and four kids at home between the ages of one and eight or nine are taken away from their family for two, three or four weeks to spend all that time in hospital. No one can accompany them because they are not paid for. The only people who are paid for are the patients who are going from one to the other.

1640

I ask myself: "Is this the best we can do in terms of a modern health care system? Is this some way in which technology has triumphed over the reality of how services should be delivered?" I would say, ask the women in this assembly. Would any of them accept that fate: to get into a helicopter, fly away for a couple of hundred miles in order to have a baby and spend three or four weeks away from their husbands and their kids?

When my wife had our three children I was able to be there in the delivery room. It was never a question; that was now seen as the most appropriate place for a father to be. I look now at the pattern of care we are providing in this northern community and it seems to me the reverse of what could be and what should be.

The institutions of economic domination must be attacked as well. My favourite sign at the entrance to the Hudson's Bay store in each of the communities is—you will like this, Mr Speaker, because you have a sense of humour—"Shop and compare." If you know these communities, you will know there is only one shop.

Mr Callahan: The voters did, Bob.

Mr B. Rae: The member for Brampton South said that is what voters do, but that is what voters do in a one-party state. We have not yet become a one-party state in Ontario. I know there are some who would like to think that is the way things are going, but not me.

Compare with what, starvation? Think of the prices that are being charged in these stores, now called Northern Stores. A 50 per cent cotton and polyester T-shirt for eight-year-old kids costs \$15. I have a cousin who happens to be in the business in Hamilton and I was reflecting with him on how he felt about that charge. He said, "Do you know what my cost is?" I said, "What?" He said, "It is \$2.50 in Montreal."

You look at the markup of at least \$12.50 on a \$2.50 T-shirt that is going to our poorest citizens in this province, the people who have the least capacity to pay and the least choice in terms of where they are as consumers. Frozen hamburger at \$8 a kilogram. I know the government House

leader goes out and buys frozen hamburger all the time, and I would ask him to reflect on how that compares. Pampers are twice the cost you would find in any store in any major city in this province.

Mr Dietsch: The House leader does not buy them.

Mr B. Rae: I do not raise these issues to make a joke as some of my friends might. I raise these to be very serious. These citizens in our province are being ripped off by economic institutions that have a monopoly in each one of the communities we visited. Any government worth its salt would have stepped in, and not put in price controls, but frankly would have said to the Hudson's Bay: "We do not need you operating in a community where you have a monopoly. We will let the communities operate these services as a co-op themselves. Goodbye, Hudson's Bay, goodbye. We do not need you any more."

There is nothing free, adventuring, enterprising or ennobling about any of this. You will not find it reading Peter C. Newman, but that is what you get. It is called extracting whatever you can from the rump of empire and monopoly. Governments should be using their countervailing power on behalf of consumers to stop it, because these monopolies run by the private sector are nothing but a licence to print money.

Where do we start? First of all, with a commitment to self-government and to economic self-management: This means a land base and it means a capital base. It means access to education and information to make development possible. It means building strong, co-operative institutions. It means giving credit unions and co-ops the kind of help that will make them work. It means working with the band's own priorities, starting with the basics of sewers, water treatment and better housing. It means services for people, recreation, education and care for the young and the old. All of these will sustain the community if and when they can be run by and for the community.

For generations now in this province we have said, "We are going to leave this one to the feds." In many respects, the native people themselves have wanted to deal exclusively with the federal government. Yet having made this trip, I do want to say that I think this is something we have to look at very seriously as a province. I believe profoundly there are things we can do.

It is, after all, one of the ironies of our history that on the Quebec side of the same James Bay, populated by the same people, who simply because of the vagaries of European political

history happen to be in Quebec rather than another jurisdiction, the James Bay Cree signed a deal with Hydro-Québec, which is a provincial institution. It was flooding traditional hunting and fishing lands. From that deal came capital and very considerable success for some. In fact, there is a new book out, which everyone can read, about Chief Billy Diamond and the extraordinary success he has had.

Surely, it is also true that Ontario itself has benefited enormously from the terms of Treaty 9, which was signed in 1905. How have we benefited? Members should think of all the land and resources that are now under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Natural Resources, the domain now of the emperor of the north. He has that because of the treaty that was signed in which lands were ceded, given away by the native people, in response to certain promises solemnly made by the federal crown. The province got that windfall. The province has that wealth. The province received control over that resource, so the province has a direct stake, a direct share, and in hard economic terms, is a direct beneficiary of the terms of Treaty 9.

I believe and my colleagues believe this capital of land and money must now be turned back to those whose land it once was and still should be. Land and capital are the critical foundations of any meaningful economic settlement, and unless we can arrive at an economic settlement all we are talking about is more paternalism, more social services, more handouts, which nobody wants and which are as demeaning to those who give as to those who receive. It is unconscionable to allow the simple lack of clout and leverage of those living on the Ontario side of James Bay to deprive them of so much.

There has been much debate recently about the federal spending power and the ways in which this can and should be exercised. My colleague the member for Nickel Belt has some strong views on this.

It is a simple fact of constitutional life that a provincial government that can send money for development in Jamaica can do the same for development in its own north. I want to repeat that: If the Ontario government can provide foreign aid to the victims of disaster in foreign lands—I, for one, salute that, have called on governments to do it and am very much in favour of it—if we can have an economic development plan for Jamaica after the hurricane, surely to God we as a province can have an economic development plan for our own native communities after the hurricane of the last 300 to 400 years

of European settlement. That is what we are talking about.

Nothing in the division of powers, the British North America Act or the natives' insistence on retaining their direct link with the federal crown takes away from this simple fact: Ontario can do with its money what it pleases. That is a fact of life. If this Legislature decided to build a rocket and send it to the moon, we have the parliamentary authority to do that. If we can do that, I am saying we can do something on behalf of the first citizens who live north of the 50th parallel.

I spent some time outlining the experience I and my colleagues the member for Riverdale and the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr Pouliot) and our caucus staff had on this trip. I think it is the first opportunity I have had to report on it as extensively as I have to members of my own caucus. I really think it is a thing that makes one realize this is a province of remarkable contrasts. It would be wrong to say there is one north, or even two or three. There are several, and there are also several Ontarios. I have given this speech in the conviction that this government does not speak for all those Ontarios and certainly does not act for all of them.

1650

I think the people of Ontario had high hopes for the Premier and for this government when they were elected in 1985. I think they had high hopes that a government, which appeared to differ from previous Conservative administrations, which was elected in combination with the New Democratic Party to make some changes in 1985 and which won an independent mandate in 1987, was a government about which there was enormous goodwill from the people of Ontario.

Some hon members: It's still there.

Mr B. Rae: The members are heckling me, saying it is still there. I do not believe it is, I really do not. What I believe is that there is a sense of frustration, a sense that so much more could be done.

Mr Laughren: It's a betrayal.

Mr B. Rae: There is a sense of betrayal. There is a sense of having voted effectively for change and change never happening; for having voted effectively for environmental action and getting a lottery; for having voted for action on housing and having nothing; a world in which the Del Zottos and the Muzzos of this world are still in charge, still running the show, funding Liberal campaign after Liberal campaign across the province and still basically operating as if what governments did independently did not matter.

The realities I have tried to describe I think are real. I have tried not to paint a gloomy picture, because I do not feel gloomy about my province; I feel optimistic about my province. But I feel exceedingly gloomy about this government, about a government that has failed miserably to deal directly with the critical questions and that has been unable to do the necessary about them.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr B. Rae: I know I will be heckled for this mercilessly by my colleagues, but I want to close by suggesting that there is perhaps a need for us to reflect more as a province on what it is we owe each other, as well as what we can get out of our colleagues and out of life and out of the good things that economic prosperity brings.

I know it is not fashionable in the Me generation to talk about this, but I firmly believe it is important and indeed crucial for us at this particular point in our history to understand what it is we owe each other. In that light I might just quote the words, in conclusion, before I will read a motion to amend the throne speech, of the American theologian and writer, Reinhold Niebuhr. I have read them before, but I find them particularly meaningful at this point in my life.

"Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime; therefore, we must be saved by hope. Nothing true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore, we must be saved by faith. Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore, we are saved by love."

Those are the words I have quoted on other occasions when speaking to my colleagues in the New Democratic Party. I believe profoundly that our party has a message, that our party has an obligation to the people of this province and to the people of this country to express as profoundly as we can a sense of solidarity, a sense of community, a sense of what we owe each other and, yes, a sense of love. I have expressed that thought on many occasions. I wanted to express it particularly today in speaking on this speech from the throne.

As is customary and, indeed, as I very much want to do, I would like now to read an amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech from the throne. I will move, in light of all of the things I have said about the extraordinary contrasts in our province, the contrast between rich and poor, the contrast between north and south, the contrast between native and non-native, in light of what I have had to say about the social agenda and the economic

agenda that is waiting to be accomplished on behalf of working families and how that agenda has been utterly and completely betrayed by this Liberal government, I would like to read this amendment.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Rae moves, seconded by the member for Windsor-Riverside, that the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session be amended by adding the following words:

"This House, however, regrets that the speech from the throne simply confirms the slide of this government into the complacent drift of a huge majority and condemns the government for:

"Failing utterly to address the issue of tax justice, despite the predictably draconian tax unfairness of the federal Tory budget, while continuing its unprecedented financial squeeze on municipalities;

"Ignoring the garbage crisis in Ontario while trivializing our environmental problems with its proposed lottery;

"Continuing its attack on the rights of working people through its proposed changes to workers' compensation and its broken promises on pensions;

"Playing politics with social assistance, proposing much, much less than the first phase of the Thomson report's recommendations, while signalling buck-passing on the costs;

"Making empty promises on education reform by failing to back up commitments with financial support; and

"Leaving untouched and unmentioned an extraordinary range of issues facing the people of Ontario, including car insurance, home care, the north, housing, energy, the nursing shortage, the teacher shortage, post-secondary education, employment equity, health and safety, agriculture and employment standards, among others.

"Therefore, this House declares its lack of confidence in this government."

On motion by Mr Harris, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 1658.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*
(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

-
- Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)
 Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)
 Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)
 Beer, Charles (York North L)
 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)
 Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)
Bradley, Hon James J., Minister of the Environment (St Catharines L)
 Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breaugh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)
 Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)
 Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)
Caplan, Hon Elinor, Minister of Health (Orillia L)
 Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)
 Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
 Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)
 Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)
 Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)
Conway, Hon Sean G., Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)
 Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)
 Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)
 Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)
Curling, Hon Alvin, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)
 Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)
 Dietsch, Michael M. (St Catharines-Brock L)
Eakins, Hon John F., Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)
Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A., Speaker (Perth L)
 Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)
Elston, Hon Murray J., Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L)
 Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)
 Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)
 Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)
 Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)
 Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)
 Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)
 Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)
Fontaine, Hon René, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)
Fulton, Hon Ed, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)
Grandmaitre, Hon Bernard C., Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)
 Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)
 Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)
 Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)
 Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)
 Hart, Christine E. (York East L)
 Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)
Hošek, Hon Chaviva, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)
 Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Kanter, Ron (St Andrew-St Patrick L)
Kerrio, Hon Vincent G., Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)
 Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)
 Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)
Kwinter, Hon Monte, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L)
 Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)
 LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)
 Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)
 Lipsett, Ron (Grey L)
 Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L)
 MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L)
 Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)
 Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)
Mancini, Hon Remo, Minister without Portfolio (Essex South L)
 Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)
 Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)
 Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L)
 McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)
 McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)
 McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)
 McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)
 McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)
McLeod, Hon Lyn, Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)
 Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste Marie NDP)
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)

Nixon, Hon Robert F., Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics (Brant-Haldimand L)

Oddie Munro, Hon Lily, Minister of Culture and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)

Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)

O'Neil, Hon Hugh P., Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Quinte L)

O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)

Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)

Patten, Hon Richard, Minister of Government Services (Ottawa Centre L)

Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)

Peterson, Hon David R., Premier and President of the Council and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (London Centre L)

Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)

Phillips, Hon Gerry, Minister of Citizenship (Scarborough-Agincourt L)

Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott and Russell L)

Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)

Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)

Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)

Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)

Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)

Rae, Bob (York South NDP)

Ramsay, Hon David, Minister of Correctional Services (Timiskaming L)

Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-Walkerville L)

Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)

Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Riddell, Hon Jack, Minister of Agriculture and Food (Huron L)

Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)

Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)

Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)

Scott, Hon Ian G., Attorney General (St George-St David L)

Smith, David W. (Lambton L)

Smith, Hon E. Joan, Solicitor General (London South L)

Sola, John (Mississauga East L)

Sorbara, Hon Gregory S., Minister of Labour (York Centre L)

South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)

Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)

Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)

Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)

Sweeney, Hon John, Minister of Community and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)

Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)

Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)

Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Ward, Hon Christopher C., Minister of Education (Wentworth North L)

Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)

Wilson, Hon Mavis, Minister without Portfolio (Dufferin-Peel L)

Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)

Wong, Hon Robert C., Minister of Energy (Fort York L)

Wrye, Hon William, Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Peterson, Hon David R., Premier and President of the Council and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Nixon, Hon Robert F., Deputy Premier, Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics

Conway, Hon Sean G., Minister of Mines

Bradley, Hon James J., Minister of the Environment

Scott, Hon Ian G., Attorney General

Riddell, Hon Jack, Minister of Agriculture and Food

Eakins, Hon John F., Minister of Municipal Affairs

Kerrio, Hon Vincent G., Minister of Natural Resources

O'Neil, Hon Hugh P., Minister of Tourism and Recreation

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Wrye, Hon William, Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations

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 tion
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 McLeod, Hon Lyn, Minister of Colleges and
 Universities
 Patten, Hon Richard, Minister of Government
 Services
 Phillips, Hon Gerry, Minister of Citizenship
 Wong, Hon Robert C., Minister of Energy
 Mancini, Hon Remo, Minister without Portfolio
 Wilson, Hon Mavis, Minister without Portfolio

PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANTS

Ballinger, William G.: assistant to the Minister
 of Natural Resources (Durham-York L)
 Beer, Charles: assistant to the Minister of
 Education (York North L)
 Brown, Michael A.: assistant to the Minister of
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 Cordiano, Joseph: assistant to the Minister of
 Tourism and Recreation (Lawrence L)
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 Ferraro, Rick E.: assistant to the Minister of
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 Haggerty, Ray: assistant to the Minister
 of Consumer and Commercial Relations
 (Niagara South L)
 Hart, Christine E. (Ms): assistant to the Minister
 of Treasury and Economics (York East L)
 Kanter, Ron: assistant to the Solicitor General
 (St Andrew-St Patrick L)
 Keyes, Kenneth A.: assistant to the Minister of
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 LeBourdais, Linda (Mrs): assistant to the
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 coko West L)
 Leone, Laureano: assistant to the Minister of
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 Lupusella, Tony: assistant to the Minister of
 Government Services (Dovercourt L)
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 West L)
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 South, Larry: assistant to the Minister of Energy
 (Frontenac-Addington L)
 Sullivan, Barbara (Mrs): assistant to the Minis-
 ter of Labour (Halton Centre L)
 Velshi, Murad: assistant to the Minister of
 Citizenship (Don Mills L)

*The alphabetical list of members appears in each issue. The other lists, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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No. 5

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Second Session, 34th Parliament

Tuesday, 2 May 1989

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, 2 May 1989

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HOMES FOR THE AGED

Ms Bryden: Last November, the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs (Mrs Wilson) told us in her estimates presentation that she was undertaking the development of options to ensure adequate standards of care in rest and retirement homes.

I and my New Democrat colleagues in the Legislature have been pointing out to both the Progressive Conservative and Liberal governments for many years that there is a great vacuum in provincial legislation on this subject. We know that they do provide residential care for a great many seniors and for some adults in other age groups. We know that there is considerable concern about the quality of life provided in some residences.

Almost a year after the minister made her announcement in her estimates, we have finally received a report, entitled Findings of the Survey of Rest and Retirement Homes, dated 5 April 1989. While the survey has given us some statistics on these residences, there are absolutely no recommendations for bringing them under provincial regulation and inspection.

When is the minister going to take this next step and get on the way to regulating these institutions in order to ensure the quality of life in them for all people in the province who occupy such residences?

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mrs Cunningham: My statement today is directed to the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr Sweeney). The minister advised us yesterday that we can expect a plan or framework for the implementation of the Social Assistance Review Committee two or three days after the budget speech. We would like to remind the minister, and I quote from Transitions, "The changes proposed for stage one ought to be achievable within a time frame of one year."

It is now eight months since Transitions was tabled with this government. George Thomson

stated publicly that there are a number of urgent recommendations, including immediate increases in benefit levels. He further stated that movement on some of those issues within one year would not in his view create any unintended problems, so long as the overall first stage of reforms is completed within the one-year period.

We expected a total blueprint with cost implications to be presented no later than 6 March. We are now advised that the budget may be delayed into the month of June.

Yesterday, we questioned the extent to which municipalities have been consulted around costing implications of the SARC recommendations. We would urge more direct, detailed and serious consultation with municipalities.

The public has waited too long. The minister is eight months overdue now. He should not let the budget delay force him into no action on the report called Transitions.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN YUGOSLAVIA

Mr Sola: A resolution of the European Parliament, having regard to the serious nature of the tension and incidents in Kosovo which have caused many casualties, calls for a return to constitutional normality and a prompt suspension of the emergency measures; hopes that a political solution will be found to the problems of coexistence between ethnic groups in Kosovo which will recognize the region's autonomous status and the Albanian population's ethnic, linguistic and cultural identity and its political and institutional representatives' right to the free and democratic expression of their views; calls for human rights to be fully respected and, in this context, for the release of political prisoners and a judicial inquiry to identify those responsible for the casualties; instructs its president to forward this resolution to the council, the commission, the governments of the member states and the Yugoslav government.

Members may ask, "Why read it in this House?" When one is approached by a person adopted as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International, a person who was a political prisoner for four years for the "crime" of collecting signatures for a petition for the release of political prisoners, one is bound by conscience

to respond. When this person risked his life to represent groups such as the Croatian Committee for Human Rights, the Croatian Democratic Union for Protection Against Discrimination and Unlawful Persecution in Yugoslavia, the Slovenian Writers' Guild and Albanian intellectuals from Kosovo, one must support his endeavours.

I am honoured that Dobroslav Paraga and his brother Domagoj are here in the west gallery.

PROPOSED NEUTRINO OBSERVATORY

Mr Laughren: For some time now the Premier (Mr Peterson) has been trying to make up his mind on whether or not to provide provincial funding for a neutrino observatory in Sudbury. In this regard, I appreciate the efforts of the member for Nipissing (Mr Harris) yesterday.

As a matter of fact, the observatory would be located in Creighton mine. It is the best location anywhere in North America. The deep mine shaft is already there and Ontario has a supply of heavy water. The National Research Council has already put \$1 million into the project and Ontario has been asked for \$7.2 million over four years. That is all.

There is enormous support for this project in the international scientific community. It would put Sudbury in the forefront of pure scientific research, it would attract leading scientists from around the world and it would complement existing research that already is going on in Ontario universities.

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The Premier's technology fund, presumably the source of the money, has not spent its allocation of funds any year since its creation. For the Premier to refuse to make his decision known now could put the entire project in jeopardy. He should make a commitment to fund the project and he should make that commitment now.

TORONTO AREA TRANSPORTATION

Mr Cousens: The Minister of Transportation (Mr Fulton) is failing the commuters of Metropolitan Toronto. In his strategy for the future, he promised to reduce congestion in the short term. He is demonstrating a flippant, irresponsible, noncaring attitude to Metro's transportation crisis. A one-mile extension to the Spadina subway hardly qualifies as a significant initiative. Metro council had little choice but to concede to the minister's desire to extend the Spadina subway. He cannot point to any noteworthy improvement to ease congestion over the past year.

Congestion in Metropolitan Toronto is becoming worse on every front. The roads and transit services are all in serious trouble, and the Ontario government did not even mention transportation in the throne speech. Insufficient moneys have been set aside to do anything, let alone maintain present services.

The minister's promise to reduce congestion in the short term is a sham and a farce, and the people around Metro Toronto know how bad the services are, even if he does not. We have a Minister of Transportation who is out of touch. He has no plans, only words and broken promises. This is not enough to meet Toronto's growing need of transportation services. Ed Fulton, shape up or ship out.

The Speaker: Order. This might be the appropriate time to remind all members that when we refer to another member, we refer to that member by the ministry or the riding.

DRINKING AND DRIVING

Mr Tatham: The death of a child hurts; more so if that death is caused by a drinking driver or a driver who has been using drugs. I agree with the staff of the drinking-driving countermeasures office. The staff at the countermeasures office takes the point of view that the drinking driver must be kept off the road through legal means.

They take the position that drivers will be more likely to stay sober if they realize that impaired drivers risk losing the right to drive for increasingly long periods of time. This includes the professional driver who may be using a forged licence to continue driving while under suspension. There has to be a conscious effort and firm commitment from management to create and uphold a clear policy on alcohol and drug use by employees.

As a first step in reducing the employers' risk and society's risk, we suggest that all the employers' workers who have suspended licences be identified through a records search of the Ministry of Transportation files. A second proposal is that all those who currently have their licences suspended be taken from positions which require driving a vehicle for work-related duties. A third proposal is that all those who have had their licences suspended be monitored for signs of alcohol or drug abuse. Our final proposal is that all employees' licences be monitored on a continuing basis to ensure that no suspended drivers are employed as drivers.

The Speaker: The member's time has now expired. Thank you. The member for Scarborough West for 20 seconds.

SOUTH AFRICAN INVESTMENTS

Mr R. F. Johnston: I just want to commend the University of Windsor for divesting all its holdings in South Africa, an example to all the rest of the university community and, I would say as well, to the government of Ontario, which should show the same kind of courage and foresight and do likewise.

VISITORS

The Speaker: Just before I call for ministry statements, I would like to ask all members of this assembly to recognize in the Speaker's gallery an all-party working group of the Dáil. These members of the Irish Parliament are Vincent Brady, the leader of the delegation, Ms Anne Colley, Jim Higgins, Liam Lawlor and John Bruton. Please join me in welcoming this delegation.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

FAMILY VIOLENCE

VIOLENCE CONJUGALE

Hon Mr Sorbara: In last week's throne speech members will recall that the government made a commitment to maintaining the safety and security of our neighbourhoods and communities. As part of its direction to ensure that the quality of life in this province will be protected, the government announced a series of new and enhanced initiatives. One of them was an increased effort to prevent violence against women and children.

I am pleased to announce today that we are increasing funding for wife assault prevention and services for the 1989-90 fiscal year by some \$5.4 million. This represents a 17 per cent increase over last year. This, plus cost-of-living increases of nearly \$500,000, brings the province's total spending on wife assault programs and services this fiscal year to \$40 million, compared to \$16 million spent in 1985. This is the fourth consecutive year that we have allotted increased funds to wife assault prevention and service programs.

Je suis heureux d'annoncer aujourd'hui que nous augmenterons de 5,4 millions de dollars les fonds consacrés aux programmes de prévention et aux services d'intervention en matière de violence conjugale pour l'exercice financier 1989-1990. Cela représente une augmentation de 17 pour cent par rapport au dernier exercice.

Cette augmentation, qui s'ajoute à celle des indemnités d'ajustement au coût de la vie de près de 500 000 \$, porte à 40 millions de dollars le

montant total consacré par le gouvernement provincial aux programmes de prévention et aux services d'intervention en matière de violence conjugale, comparé à 16 millions de dollars en 1985.

C'est la quatrième fois en quatre ans que nous augmentons les fonds consacrés aux programmes de prévention et aux services d'intervention en matière de violence conjugale.

We have long known that the impact of wife assault is far-reaching. This form of violence in the home endangers not only the lives of the women against whom this crime is committed, but the wellbeing of children who witness it and the security and stability of society as a whole. For this reason, \$35.7 million of the total of \$40 million this fiscal year will be spent on services that directly benefit women and children.

We believe that we must send a message that there is never an excuse for wife assault. This is the reason we have focused our wife assault initiatives in three specific areas: (1) law enforcement and criminalization, (2) family support programs and shelter services and (3) public and professional education and prevention activities.

The new funds that I am announcing today will continue to support 22 ongoing initiatives in this area and provide funds for one new initiative. Fifteen provincial ministries and agencies are involved in an integrated approach to wife assault prevention, co-ordinated by the Ontario women's directorate.

Let me outline now how the new funds will be allocated. To the Ministry of Community and Social Services will go \$2.1 million for counselling programs in community agencies and programs for women, for children who have witnessed the violence and for male batterers. The ministry will also receive \$2.7 million to enhance the existing shelter system; for example, to improve staffing ratios in shelters, particularly in rural areas.

An additional \$200,000 will go to shelters to increase the number of child support workers in response to recent increases in the number of shelter beds. When cost-of-living increases are included, the shelter system will be receiving more than \$3 million in increased funding this fiscal year, bringing the total shelter budget allocation to \$16.3 million.

The Ministry of the Attorney General currently operates victim/witness assistance programs in 10 crown attorney offices around the province. These programs provide support, services and information to victim/witnesses who face special

difficulties in the criminal justice system. These existing 10 programs will receive additional funding of some \$80,000, for a total this fiscal year of \$884,000.

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Some \$105,000 in new funding will go to the Ministry of Correctional Services for counselling programs for male batterers, bringing this year's total to \$679,000.

The Ministry of Education will receive \$120,000 in new funds, for a total of \$552,000, for ongoing school programs to raise educators' awareness of wife assault and its impact on children, and to look at the role schools can play in prevention at the community level.

The Ministry of Citizenship will receive an additional \$45,000, for a total of almost \$1 million, to support existing pilot projects that increase immigrant families' access to wife assault services. The pilot projects provide community-based cultural interpreter services and intercultural training programs for staff of human resource agencies who work with battered women.

Finally, funds are going to a new initiative. The Office for Disabled Persons will receive \$50,000 to go towards a study of the incidence of violence against women with disabilities and the accessibility of government services to this group.

This government recognizes that all Ontarians, and in this particular case women, have a right to security of the person and that all our citizens have the right to live in a society protected from crime, violence and fear. We believe a sense of safety and security is absolutely crucial to our children's future, and nowhere does a feeling of safety and security make a more important contribution to our collective future welfare than in our homes.

For this reason, I am delighted to announce this increased effort to prevent violence against women and children in Ontario.

ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Hon Mr Phillips: I rise to make an announcement regarding the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

In last week's throne speech, we underscored this government's commitment to ensuring that Ontario is indeed a society where we all can live together in harmony and dignity. As part of that commitment, I am pleased to announce that we will be significantly strengthening the ability of our commission to fulfil its mandate.

We will be allocating to the commission an additional \$3 million worth of resources, bringing its total operating budget to almost \$11 million for this fiscal year. This new funding will increase the effectiveness of the commission on two fronts. First, it will allow the commission to deal with and address causes of complaints, and second, it will improve the commission's ability to deal swiftly with complaints.

The commission will be able to expand the scope of its activities in the area of investigation of systemic discrimination, policy development and education and public awareness. These expanded areas of activity will help the commission achieve its objectives by addressing the issues of discrimination on a broader basis and eliminating barriers to full and equal participation in the life of our province.

Approximately 75 per cent of the increase will go directly to investigation and complaint resolution. The Ontario Human Rights Commission has the highest case load of any commission in Canada. In 1987-88, the commission handled 1,800 cases. This number is twice as many per capita as any other commission in the country and four times the level of our federal commission.

Therefore, I would also like to bring to the attention of the House the fact that the additional funding I have announced today will allow the commission to improve significantly the time it takes to handle individual complaints.

In addition, the commission will receive an additional \$1.4 million of capital funding that will be used to streamline its operation here in Metropolitan Toronto. Funds will also be used to establish two new offices, one in Downsview and one in Kenora. These new offices, and our established offices across the province, will provide enhanced access to the public.

The additional funding to the Ontario Human Rights Commission will continue to enhance the effectiveness of our commission and will further strengthen Ontario's commitment in the whole area of human rights.

PROPERTY TAX GRANTS

SUBVENTIONS POUR IMPÔTS FONCIERS

Hon Mr Grandmaitre: I would like to advise the honourable members about an important event in this government's programs, one that provides tax relief for Ontario's senior citizens.

Yesterday, the Ministry of Revenue started mailing the spring portion of the 1989 property tax grant cheques. The total amount of \$192.3 million will benefit as many as 684,000 eligible

senior citizens in Ontario. The maximum payment per household is \$300, while the average amount per cheque is \$281. The second half of the grant will be mailed at the end of October 1989.

These payments are characteristic of the province's commitment to provide tax assistance benefits that will assist Ontario seniors to continue living in their own homes. I would like to thank the honourable members and their constituency office staff for their continued efforts in support of this program. It is a positive reflection of this government's response to a legitimate community need.

J'aimerais présenter aux députés un volet important des programmes de notre gouvernement, un volet qui vise à alléger le fardeau fiscal des personnes âgées de l'Ontario.

Le ministère du Revenu a commencé hier à envoyer la première partie des chèques de subvention pour impôt foncier de 1989. Plus de 684 000 personnes âgées admissibles en Ontario vont bénéficier de ces subventions, d'un total de 192,3 millions de dollars.

Le versement maximal par foyer s'élève à 300 \$ et la moyenne par chèque est de 281 \$. La deuxième partie de la subvention sera postée à la fin octobre.

Le versement de ces subventions d'aide fiscale illustre bien l'engagement pris par le gouvernement de l'Ontario, qui vise à aider les personnes âgées à vivre dans leur propre logement.

RESPONSES

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Mr R. F. Johnston: I would like to respond to the minister responsible for women's issues (Mr Sorbara). I am very pleased with the fact that the amounts for battered women have been increased this year and I would be remiss if I did not say so, but I also want to say that I am a little concerned about some essential dishonesty that is involved in this report.

It is true that in the throne speech the government said it wishes to look after the security of the individual, but more specific promises have been made in the past. For instance, the member for London Centre (Mr Peterson), now the Premier, made the following statement on 15 March 1985, leading up to that provincial election:

"We've got to get elected so we can ensure the safety of all abused women seeking shelter and counselling, and we do that by making a solid commitment to both first- and second-stage shelters and services. We'd also introduce a bill

devoted exclusively to services for battered women.

"Let me give you just one example of the reality of Frank Miller's Ontario in this regard. Mississauga has only one battered women's shelter and it has to serve all of Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon. That is more than half a million people. In 1984 alone, that lone shelter turned away 1,000 desperate women and children."

Since 1984, there has not been a major increase in the number of shelters in this province. The only shelters that have been increased were ones that were provided by the past Tory government. The minister himself admitted there are only 700 and some beds in the province today. That is exactly the same number there were in 1984. We have had shelters close in Ontario during that process. This government has refused time after time, year after year, to increase the number of spaces that are available.

Let me deal with the second matter, with what I think is an insult to disabled women in this province. A couple of years ago, disabled women did a study that showed they were more abused as a group than any other group in society. It made horrible, terrifying common sense, and yet this government today is announcing a study of the effects of violence on disabled women rather than making our transition homes accessible to them, because virtually none of them are.

I would just like to say that if members want to read the document that was produced in 1982 by the standing committee on social development—I had the honour of having it referred out to that committee—it is still not being implemented in the fashion we said it should be. The promises made by the Premier prior to the 1985 election, which were part of our recommendations in this report, have never been implemented.

The government should not stand up and feel self-proud today of the fact that this year again, thousands and thousands of women and children are going to be turned away from hostels because it refused to respond to that basic need out there.

1400

ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Mr B. Rae: In responding to the comments by the Minister for Citizenship (Mr Phillips), we obviously want to say how happy we are that the Ontario Human Rights Commission's long battle inside Management Board and inside the bowels of the Liberal government has finally produced an increase in its budget.

All of us, I think, are aware of the fact that this is 2 May 1989. It was in May 1985 that the minister's leader and I negotiated an accord ensuring the Ontario Human Rights Commission would in fact receive additional resources. It has been a long time in coming, to make sure it gets those kinds of resources.

I would add that the issue on which the people of this province are waiting to hear from the government is the question of employment equity, the question of affirmative action legislation. I might add some of the issues I raised yesterday in my reply to the speech from the throne, when I talked about the human rights problems of people living north of the 50th parallel in this province, which are simply tremendous. We congratulate the minister, but there is much more to be done.

PROPERTY TAX GRANTS

Mr B. Rae: In responding to the announcement by the Minister of Revenue (Mr Grand-maitre) on property tax grants, I cannot resist the observation that even in an age of new politics some things really never change. This is not an announcement of anything new; this is an announcement of day-to-day work by government that has been approved by this House. The property tax grant news could equally be delivered to senior citizens in their cheques, which I am sure will have the minister's picture on them, or perhaps a portrait of the Attorney General (Mr Scott) and the Premier (Mr Peterson), or the Four Horsemen on the front bench all together.

The value of the property tax credit is less today in real terms than it was 10 years ago. What the government is doing for seniors in real terms is less than it was when it was first announced 15 years ago.

The Speaker: The member's time has now expired.

Mr B. Rae: This is an announcement that should not have been made.

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Mr Jackson: I too would like to respond to the minister responsible for women's issues (Mr Sorbara) with respect to his announcement today. I would be remiss as well if I did not say that any new moneys that are committed towards this terrible social injustice are appropriate, but I must admit that these moneys are not going as far as they could and certainly are not going as far as they should.

We turned away over 8,000 women and children from transition and interval houses last year. Based on this announcement, there is every indication we will probably turn away that many more this year and next. I am concerned that within the three or four ministries dealing with the issue of child support workers, the government has still not worked out an adequate definition of what constitutes that service.

If the government is going to relegate this to custodial status, if it is just providing about \$3,000 in funds per centre in this province, how can it expect those programs to be of the quality of crisis intervention, counselling and court advocacy and referral, and those complex matters, where those workers are supposed to understand the psychological effects of violence they witness or that is received in a home setting?

Where are the responsibilities of the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs (Mrs Wilson) in this matter? There is no comment in all the notes we received in the minister's announcement this morning about abuse of senior citizens, whether they are institutionalized or not.

Where is the commitment to fund supervised access programs? His government is starting an initiative to force children into access situations, whether they wish to be put in that situation or not, but his government refuses to fund a single supervised access program.

Where is the commitment to real court reforms? The treatment by the Attorney General (Mr Scott) here is very poor; if in fact he wanted to seriously address the issues, he would look at the statutory assumption in our court system that a woman who is the victim of rape or family violence is not subject to emotional distress. She has to go into a courtroom and relive the horror of that incident a second time. God forbid that she wishes to apply to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board; she has to be subjected to that process a third time in this province.

Those are the kinds of reforms that are required. Hidden within these reforms that are announced today are moneys that he will get from the federal government under Bill C-89. He will receive moneys that are taken from criminals and put into the coffers of this province.

But the commitment we are seeing from this province under the Premier (Mr Peterson) is that he would rather tax new home owners, small businessmen and property tax owners. He will not tax criminals in the way the federal government is encouraging us to examine that method. Quite frankly, with what the Premier now

exercises, only law-abiding citizens in this province pay the taxes for our criminal justice system in David Peterson's Ontario.

The Speaker: The member for Cochrane South.

Mr Pope: It is too bad the Attorney General and the Premier do not pay attention to the words of the member for Burlington South (Mr Jackson) as he discusses a very serious issue in this province. It is obvious the Attorney General and the Premier could not give a whit about the problems women face in David Peterson's Ontario.

PROPERTY TAX GRANTS

Mr Pope: I want to comment with respect to the statement of the Minister of Revenue (Mr Grandmaitre). Yes, we do support the property tax grant system for seniors; we started it. It is true that seniors now, under the David Peterson's Ontario, are falling further and further behind.

We have to sense today the delicious irony of a government giving property tax grant support to seniors so that they can stay in their homes, and at the same time cutting back on the home care services they need to stay there. We have had cutbacks for the Red Cross. We have had cutbacks for the Victorian Order of Nurses. The whole thing is becoming a disgrace that this government is responsible for and that is detrimental to the wellbeing and health of the senior citizens of this province.

We saw last year the largest tax grab in Ontario's history: \$1.2 billion. In the face of that, we have seen a government that has flat-lined its transfers, its unconditional grants to municipalities. It has flat-lined road subsidies. It has reduced its grants, its support for the boards of education across the province.

The result is that seniors and every other property owner of this province will pay more taxes this year, because this government is not prepared to live up to its obligations for senior citizens or for any other property owner in Ontario. It is a disgrace that the Liberal Party is responsible for.

ORAL QUESTIONS

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Mr B. Rae: I have a question for the Premier. It follows from questions I put to the Premier last week, which he assigned to the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley), but I want to get the Premier to answer these questions personally. The only way I can do that is to put a very personal question to him about his involvement

with Envacc Resources, with the principals of Envacc Resources and with the meeting he held with some principals and representatives of Envacc Resources on 23 June 1988.

I asked the Premier on 23 January 1989 to tell us in detail what he knew about Envacc Resources. In his answer to my question, he did not tell us at all about the fact he had had a meeting on 23 June. I wonder if the Premier can tell us why he did not inform the House when I asked him directly to tell us in detail what he knew about Envacc Resources, why he did not in fact do that and why he simply deflected the question to a discussion about regional chairmen.

The Speaker: That is two questions.

Mr B. Rae: I would like to ask him that question very directly.

Hon Mr Peterson: There are no secrets. I met with them. The member did not ask me if I had met with them. If he had asked me, I would have told him, just like I met with other people with other ideas in the whole matter. It is no big surprise, surely.

Mr B. Rae: I say to the Premier it is a surprise and it is a question of his political judgement. When he met with Envacc Resources, can the Premier tell us, did he realize that one of the principals of Envacc Resources was Marco Muzzo? Did he realize that Mr Muzzo is the owner of thousands of acres of land in York region and that Mr Muzzo is, individually and through companies he controls, the largest contributor to the Liberal Party of Ontario? Did he realize that the same Mr Muzzo is the individual who was directly involved with the purchase of the Premier's family company? Was he aware of all these facts?

1410

Hon Mr Peterson: I have read the same newspaper articles the member is now regurgitating from some months ago and the answer is there is nothing there, let me tell him. It is beneath him, frankly, to even try to suggest there is.

Mr B. Rae: There is a very basic question about political judgement here. I asked the Premier some very direct questions about the appropriateness of that meeting, about the agenda of Envacc Resources for the control of Ontario's garbage in southern Ontario and about whether the public interest is going to be protected or we are going to see private developers taking over the disposal of waste in this province. That is the issue, that is the

question and I do not think those questions should be beneath the Premier answering.

I wonder if the Premier can answer this question. Since he is saying he was aware of all of those factors, does he not think the public is entitled to a complete and total environmental assessment under the Environmental Assessment Act of the next landfill that is going to be built in Metropolitan Toronto and in the surrounding region? Does he not think the public interest would be served by the public having complete control of this process and not having it taken over by the private development industry in Ontario?

Hon Mr Peterson: My honourable friend is confusing a large number of issues at the same time. I guess that is a question of, as he says, political judgement. He has just defined where his political judgement is and which, frankly, does not come up very high today.

Let me just say to my honourable friend that whatever decision is made will be made by the regional chairmen. I said that before and I said that we are prepared to co-operate and assist if we possibly can. There are a number of people from the private sector who have some ideas. Anything that is done will be bid upon openly and tendered and there will be judgements made. There will not be judgements made by this government; they will be made by the regional chairmen, by the power delegated thereto.

Surely my honourable friend understands that. I think he does understand that, but I guess he is trying to read something into this that is not, in fact, the case or trying to draw some judgements on this matter that are just, frankly, unfounded and inaccurate in the circumstances.

If they have some ideas, they will take it to the regional chairmen to solve this long-term problem. If they do not, then it still goes back to the regional chairmen for their particular solutions.

CORPORATIONS TAX

Mr B. Rae: I would like to ask the Treasurer this question. The Burns Fry preliminary comments on the federal budget have some very interesting observations on the budget. It goes through a number of industry groups and shows that a number of groups have done well and some have done badly. One of the interesting results says, "Federal budget is good news, especially for the banks." It then shows how the large corporations' capital tax is not at all meaningful for the banks and that the banks have, in fact, received a very substantial windfall by not being taxed by the federal government in other ways.

The Treasurer has been warning the people of Ontario that he is going to have to raise an awful lot of money in his own budget coming up. Can he tell us whether he will do what Michael Wilson did not have the courage to do; that is, to tax those in the province who have the ability to pay, in this case particularly our financial institutions?

Hon R. F. Nixon: We rely presently on the capital tax for that purpose. I am not sure that it is completely adequate, but it is one way whereby the Treasury benefits from the assets of financial institutions. The rate of that tax has been adjusted in the past and, like other taxes, that is under consideration for the budget that I hope to read to the House some time in the next little while.

Mr B. Rae: Simply adjusting the capital tax is not good enough because, as the minister will know, the banks' profits in 1988 exceeded \$3 billion. He will know it was widely anticipated in the market that the federal government was going to raise as much as \$1.5 billion on a margin tax against the banks and it decided not to do that. So there are literally not just a few million dollars, not just a couple of million dollars, but literally hundreds of millions of dollars which the market anticipated would be taxed out of our banks and financial institutions and the federal government dropped the ball.

The question I have directly for the Treasurer is: Is he going to drop the ball or is he going to do for Ontario's taxpayers what needs to be done to ensure that those with the ability to pay are finally taxed in Ontario?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I would ask the honourable Leader of the Opposition not to yell at me because he thinks the federal policy is inadequate.

I was somewhat surprised that the margin tax, on the difference between what the banks pay their depositors and the interest they charge the people to whom they lend money, was not subject to some approach by taxation by the government of Canada. I was interested also to read the comments made by the federal minister about the possibility of the application of his new goods and services tax on financial institutions. As yet there may be some time during which the federal authorities can redeem themselves.

Mr B. Rae: We are not looking for redemption from Michael Wilson; we are looking for action from the Treasurer of Ontario. That is where the action has to come from. The Treasurer knows perfectly well that Michael Wilson is not going to do anything to change that tax with relation to the banks. This is the

financial capital of Canada; this is where the gold towers are. What is the Treasurer going to do to see that Ontario is better off as a result of a tax on the banks, rather than sticking it to consumers the way he has been sticking it to consumers over the last four years since he became Treasurer?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable gentleman is now smiling in appreciation of his own oratorical flights. The viewers in our extensive television audience are liable to think we do not take this matter seriously, and we both know—as a matter of fact we all know—that it is a very serious matter indeed.

The corporation tax is levied against bank profits in the province just like any other corporation. The fact that they can register their profits elsewhere is one of the flexibilities they have; and the fact that they had, I suppose in a funny, convoluted and upside down way, the lucky event of severe losses in their loans to Central American and South American countries and have the right under law to write off those losses, has meant that these huge profits are in some jurisdictions not fully taxable. In this instance, I consider that to be really a full explanation of the situation the honourable member has raised.

Mr Brandt: The Treasurer mentioned oratorical flights. I guess he was referring to the mission the author of the throne speech was on when that document was completed recently by the government.

HOSPITAL SERVICES

Mr Brandt: My question is for the Minister of Health and it relates to the commitment made in the throne speech with respect to an improvement in health services for the people of Ontario. I wonder how that figures with the Chedoke McMaster Hospital in Hamilton, which, as a result of the limitation and cap on funding, is going to be reducing, on a per month basis, orthopaedic procedures from 40 to 15. As a direct result of that, the minister may be interested that her new, improved health service will extend the waiting list from November of this year to well into June of 1990.

When I consider the rhetoric and the reality of what flowed from that throne speech, the two do not match up. How can she say she is improving health services when she is reducing procedures and extending the waiting list as dramatically as is going to happen at this hospital?

Hon Mrs Caplan: The leader of the third party knows there have been no cutbacks in hospital funding for any hospital in this province;

in fact, the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) announced an 8.1 per cent transfer payment increase. We are working with the Ontario Hospital Association to develop a new funding formula which will make sure that hospitals are fairly and appropriately funded to meet the needs of their communities.

Mr Brandt: The minister talks about appropriate; I am talking about waiting lists and actual cases. Dr Frank Smith, who heads the orthopaedic department at that particular hospital, has indicated that he is totally frustrated with the kind of funding she is making available to that hospital.

Rather than getting people out of institutions and back into the workforce, in fact her policies are resulting in people having to remain for a longer period of time on waiting lists and not being able to get the kind of health delivery they require in order to cure their particular problems. This is a regional hospital. It serves St Catharines and Guelph and Brantford, Hamilton, Burlington—a whole host of communities.

The Speaker: The question?

1420

Mr Brandt: How can the minister possibly stand up and talk in terms of maintaining a quality health system in this province when in fact here is one specific case of a hospital that is going to have its procedures reduced by about two thirds and its waiting list extended well into 1990? I do not understand how she has the gall to stand up and say—

The Speaker: Order. The member is just repeating the question.

Hon Mrs Caplan: The leader of the third party knows full well that in fact we are constantly trying to improve upon the very strong foundation of delivery of health services in this province and that the best way to address waiting lists is to work with the hospitals and on a regional basis to better plan for delivery of services.

During the next year the hospitals in this province will receive some \$6 billion and we are working co-operatively with the hospitals, on an individual basis as well as with the Ontario Hospital Association and others, to make sure that patient care is our number one priority and that we take advantage of new technologies which allow us to offer services in alternative ways. We are always looking to improve the services and to address the waiting times to make sure that in fact we can respond appropriately to the needs of the people.

Mr Brandt: None of that answers the questions I raised. It is rather frustrating to stand up here and talk in terms of the government's own throne speech, which said it wanted to make health care services accessible and provide affordable and appropriate health care services for all in Ontario.

The fact of the matter is that Dr Smith from Chedoke McMaster Hospital serves patients who have spinal injuries, stroke victims and individuals suffering from rheumatic arthritis. In those particular cases, many cures are possible through orthopaedic procedures that can be provided by this particular hospital.

The minister talks continuously about the amount of money she spends. I want to talk about people who are getting helped. I am telling her that this month she is reducing the number of people she is helping from 40 to 15, she is extending waiting lists and people are suffering as a result of her inane policies. When is the minister going to do something about it?

Hon Mrs Caplan: We are continuously making improvements on the very strong foundation in this province, and I would say to the leader of the third party that if he would cut out the theatrics, he would understand that in fact the hospitals are run by independent boards which establish the priorities for their hospitals. We are working with them to make sure we can respond on a regional basis so that we can meet the ever-changing needs of the people of this province.

I am not familiar with the specific case the leader raises and I would be pleased to look into that.

Mrs Marland: My question is also to the Minister of Health. The minister and I have been in discussion about one of my constituents, Jessica Godman. While there is no question in my mind that medical decisions must continue to be made by medical professionals, the political decision to cut long waiting lists for heart surgery must be made by the minister.

In the member's gallery today we have Martha Godman, the mother of baby Jessica, a three-and-a-half-month-old girl who is in desperate need of heart surgery. Mrs Godman has taken time out of her 24-hour-a-day stay with her daughter at the Hospital for Sick Children to be here today.

This poor baby has been in and out of hospitals with deteriorating health since the day she was born on 20 January 1989.

The Speaker: The question?

Mrs Marland: My question to the minister is: Is she going to continue to brush off her responsibility to cut the waiting list for heart surgery for babies by not addressing the nursing shortage for the intensive care unit patients? It has been two years that we have been asking her this question.

Hon Mrs Caplan: First, I would say to the member opposite that I am familiar with this case, that she brought it to my attention. We contacted the hospital and we have been assured by the hospital that the child is not in any immediate danger and that it is a medical decision when the surgery should be scheduled.

Mrs Marland: As I said at the outset, it is a medical decision as to the fact that the surgery is needed; it is a political decision that the surgery is being waited for. The fact is that the minister's government has found the money to fund mandatory junior kindergarten programs in this province to the tune of \$200 million.

Can the minister tell me, and perhaps tell Mrs Godman and parents of other babies on these waiting lists, how the government is willing to spend over \$200 million on junior kindergarten when there are babies who may not live long enough to make kindergarten?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I am somewhat distressed at the tone of the member's question and want to tell her and all members of this House that there is no political interference in medical decision-making in this province. We rely on physicians to use their very best judgement and ensure that emergencies take priority. I can tell her again that I understand the child is being closely monitored by physicians at one of the premier children's hospitals, not only in Ontario but across Canada. I would say to her as well that I think it is very important not to suggest there is any political interference in medical decision-making.

Mrs Marland: It is really interesting that the minister is having such difficulty hearing what I am saying. I am using Jessica Godman as an example. The truth of the matter is that another child, who is also on a waiting list for heart surgery at the Hospital for Sick Children, last night went into respiratory failure. The truth of the matter is that the minister's government does not set its priorities in terms of human needs. That has been demonstrated by its throne speech. The truth of the matter is that she will fund patients to go all over the world; she will fund patients to go to the United States and anywhere else in this province and in Canada if it is an emergency.

My question to the minister is: Since she has such a "world-class health care system," what kind of logic is it to spend megabucks sending our patients outside of this province for treatment because we have four kinds of waiting lists in Ontario?

Hon Mrs Caplan: In fact, we have been in contact, as I said, with the hospital and I want to tell the member opposite that they are making great progress in attracting nurses to the Hospital for Sick Children—some 75, I understand, have been recruited—and that this should help to ease the situation for elective surgery.

They have assured me that in fact they provide services based on their very best medical judgement to make sure that those who require it first, based on emergency and medical needs, receive it first. When the hospital cannot accommodate that patient, the patient is taken wherever it is required to make sure he or she receives the needed care when he needs it. I can tell the member that the resources are available. This province can be very proud of the commitment we have made to our hospitals, but in fact our whole priority is to meet the needs when they are needed, and we rely on the physicians of this province to do that.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. New question. The members are once again just wasting time. Other members would like to ask questions.

1430

Mrs Grier: I am waiting for the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley), Mr Speaker. Is he expected or can I stand down?

Hon Mr Conway: He had to step out. He will be back momentarily.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr Mackenzie: I have a question to the Minister of Labour. Does the minister remember his remarks on 24 January 1989 when he introduced Bill 208? He said that the single, unwavering purpose of these amendments is to fulfil a fundamental obligation of this government to make workplaces as safe as humanly possible.

We have since heard the remarks of the Premier (Mr Peterson), which I have not heard him deny, that there may be difficulty bringing in this bill. We certainly support the initiative in this particular bill. Can the Minister of Labour tell us when we will see Bill 208 brought into this House?

Hon Mr Sorbara: I am glad to hear that the member for Hamilton East continues in his support for the initiative. I cannot tell him two or three or a few days into a session of Parliament when that will be. I am not even sure that the House leaders have sat down to discuss the legislative agenda, but as soon as we have a date, I expect the member from Hamilton East will be the second to know.

Mr Mackenzie: The issue is not our support; it is the minister's agenda. He said in response to my question about the unfortunate and unnecessary Dome miner deaths that the House leaders would be looking at this or bringing in recommendations shortly. Interestingly enough, Bill 208 is not on the list of bills that was presented to the opposition parties to be finished before the end of June, and that is one of the reasons we are specifically asking him.

We know there is a tremendous lobby by the business interests. I am wondering, is the minister bowing to the construction companies, the Muzzos, the Del Zottos, the developers, the industrial companies—

The Speaker: Minister.

Mr Mackenzie: —on this bill or are we going to see it brought forward in this House?

The Speaker: Order. The question has been put.

Hon Mr Sorbara: I think that virtually anyone who serves in a government is subject to lobbies whenever initiative will bring about substantial reform in any particular area. I think my friend the member for Hamilton East will know that there is a very significant lobby in the province right now to abandon Bill 162, notwithstanding the fact that the very vitality of the workers' compensation system is dependent upon our successfully bringing into place a bill that will reform permanent partial disability, bring about rights of reinstatement and drastically change vocational rehabilitation.

So I am not concerned about lobbying. I think that is part of the political process. I said when I introduced the bill that we welcome comments from all over the province, and we have got a wide variety of comments since the bill was introduced on that day in January of this year.

HOME CARE

Mr Eves: I have a question for the Minister of Health and I hope that her backbench colleagues over here will take these health questions a little bit more seriously than they did the very

important case of the member for Mississauga South (Mrs Marland).

Mr Fleet: Ask a serious question.

Mr Eves: I am asking the member to get serious. Let him give his head a shake. I can hear it rattling from over here.

The Speaker: The question?

Mr Eves: I am going to ask the Minister of Health—

Mr Mahoney: You should be ashamed of yourself.

The Speaker: Does anyone have a question? The member for Parry Sound.

Mr Eves: Maybe Mr Mahoney is not concerned about Mississauga infants dying, but some of the people in this House are.

The Speaker: I gather you do not have a question.

Mr Eves: Yes, I have a question.

The Speaker: Well, place it.

Mr Eves: I hopefully will get an answer to the question today from the Minister of Health about the Victorian Order of Nurses and its underfunding plight in the province of Ontario. We did not get one yesterday from the Premier (Mr Peterson), by the way. It is good to see him back.

Mr Mahoney: On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker.

Mr Eves: On page 3—

The Speaker: Order. A point of order?

Mr Mahoney: On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: It is my understanding that it is unparliamentary to use a member's name in this House and to cast aspersions at him, particularly when it comes to the individual member's concerns for his riding. I would ask the member to apologize.

Mr Eves: Mr Speaker, to the member for Mississauga West, I apologize if he took offence at what I said. However, he did say that—

The Speaker: Thank you. Continue with the question.

Mr Eves: On page 3 of the VON report on underfunding, as I am sure the minister is aware, it says:

"An operational review of VON services was jointly undertaken with the Ministry of Health in October 1988. The report highlighted the shortcomings of the average per visit method of funding and recommended a revised funding approach which would separately recognize fixed costs and address changes in case complexity."

The next sentence says, "Nevertheless, nothing has been done;" and it goes on further down the page to say that there was no negotiation or consultation process in establishing this rate. Could we have the minister's comments on that, please?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I want to acknowledge the important contribution that the Victorian Order of Nurses makes in the delivery of home care services in the province and to say to the member, my critic from the third party, that the report that we have received on home care makes many far-reaching recommendations.

We are reviewing the report in detail at the present time. As we have clearly stated our commitment to community-based services, I can assure the member that we want to maintain them and enhance our working relationship with this and other groups providing services in the province.

Mr Eves: I have the Price Waterhouse report with me. On page 53, it comes to a conclusion that, "The approved amounts proved to be insufficient to meet the needs of clients judged eligible for program services." That is a pretty basic statement and that is exactly what the VON is saying. They are saying that they already have a deficit of \$2.6 million and that if the per visitation funding formula is not adjusted for this year, they are looking at another projected deficit of \$2.5 million.

The minister says she is basing her health program on more community-based health care, which we all agree with. Why will she not give the VON and others like it the moneys they need to provide this low-cost service and spend more money on community-based health care? Right now, the community-based health care portion of her health budget is four per cent—

The Speaker: Order. The member has asked the question.

Hon Mrs Caplan: In fact, for the information of the critic from the third party, between 1985-86 and 1987-88 home care program support has increased by some 60 per cent, from \$154 million to some \$245 million. I would say to him and to all members of the House that we are working with the Victorian Order of Nurses. We are responding appropriately to the report and recommendations, and I will be meeting with them this week.

PREMIER'S COUNCIL

Mr Daigeler: My question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. I understand that last week the minister discussed industrial

planning for the province with the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto. According to a Toronto Star report, the Toronto board of trade objects to a targeted economic strategy to create jobs in industries for the future.

May I ask the minister what the outcome was of his discussions and how the business community in Ontario is responding in general to the Premier's Council's call to focus on value-adding and wealth-creating industries in our economic development strategy?

Hon Mr Kwinter: Members will know that the Premier's Council has issued a report called *Competing in the Global Economy*. I would say, by and large, that it has been very favourably received across Canada and in other jurisdictions. However, the board of trade issued a critique that contained about 32 points where they were in disagreement.

The member is right that the media portrayed this as something that was going to be a shoot-out between myself, representing the Premier's Council, and members of the board of trade. I can tell members that at that dinner the agreements were far greater than the disagreements.

Basically, the one thing that we agreed to disagree on was that the board of trade felt that the government should not be intervening in the industrial strategy of the province, that that should be left to the marketplace.

I am sure that even my friends in the third party do not necessarily agree with that. We think there is a role for government to play and we are playing that role. I can say that, by and large, it has been extremely well received. The Premier's Council is proceeding and is, I think, making an outstanding contribution to the economic direction of this province.

1440

Mr Daigeler: I thank the minister very much for giving us an update on his discussions. I am pleased that there seems to be a fair amount of agreement between the Toronto business community and the policies that he is putting forward.

Yesterday, there was some question by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr B. Rae) about the work of the Premier's Council, and I am glad the minister made reference to the great appreciation of this report across the country. May I ask the minister what the next steps are in the work of the Premier's Council and when we might expect its next report, which I will read with great interest, as I have done as well for the first part?

Hon Mr Kwinter: The Premier's Council has now embarked on an in-depth look at the human

resource factor of our competitiveness. It is something that is taking a great deal of consultation and research, and I expect that the Premier's Council will be releasing its report some time towards the end of the year or early in the new year, but in that time frame.

WATER PIPELINE

Mrs Grier: I am sure the Minister of the Environment will recall his visit to Wallaceburg in 1986. He made a speech which began, "It is always a pleasure to bring good news, and that is what I have today." He went on to say, "We are moving ahead with the long-planned and long-delayed pipeline to bring safe drinking water to the people of Wallaceburg and Walpole Island."

It is still long planned and it is still long delayed, and the minister's excuse has been that he was waiting for a contribution from the federal government. He got his answer from the federal government this week when the new Minister of the Environment said there would be no federal funding for the Wallaceburg pipeline. Since receiving that information, has the minister had time to come up with another excuse, and if so what is it?

Hon Mr Bradley: I am surprised that, with the gentleman who sits beside the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, who is drawing attention to the fact that there are many deficiencies at the federal level—and this may bode well for the future in terms of the contribution he can make—the member would be so anxious to get the federal government off the hook by saying this would be an excuse.

I think the member will remember that I very quickly put the money and commitment of Ontario to the tune of 75 per cent of the cost of a water source for the people in that specific area and that I indicated at the time that this is more generous than the normal allocation, as she would know. There are people and municipalities right across Ontario that have varying percentages of money that are provided for water and sewer projects. We were prepared to do that, and the remaining amount would be the responsibility of the municipality.

I indicated at that time that I would be strongly supportive of a federal government commitment in this connection, particularly as it relates to the fact that we are dealing with Walpole Island as one of the municipalities, and also because it is an international waterway and the federal ministers have consistently signed agreements of an international nature.

The Speaker: Thank you. You might get further information on the supplementary.

Mrs Grier: I have pointed out to the minister on a number of occasions that had he built the pipeline when he first promised it, his 75 per cent of today's costs would have built it in 1986. Let me ask the minister, is he aware that since his announcement, there have been closures of the water intake pipes at Wallaceburg and Walpole Island no less than eight times, twice already in 1989, because of spills in the St Clair River?

Is he aware that Mrs Ivy Sharrow of Wallaceburg has collected a petition to all politicians saying, "We need our pipeline now for the sake of our children," and that the petition was signed by 2,639 people, a quarter of the population of Wallaceburg? What is the minister—

The Speaker: No, you have asked your question. Order. You have asked the question, "Is the minister aware of the petition?"

Hon Mr Bradley: I think that one has to look at the fact that when I hear other members interjecting, I know in their particular constituencies they would be looking for the kind of funds that people in that area would be looking for, and I, as the Minister of the Environment, must allocate funds to various municipalities across Ontario.

Some of them get up to this 75 per cent; others would get only 15 per cent for the purpose of a water line. The member for Chatham-Kent (Mr Bossy) has kept me up to date on these matters and has been meeting with several of the people in the area, including the municipal leaders.

We are deeply disappointed that the federal government has chosen not to contribute. In some ways, of course, the pressure is lifted from them, because people have been saying, "Why doesn't somebody else assume the cost?"

We have our money on the table. We have had our money on the table since the time that the member indicated and we are prepared to proceed. We in fact have continued the kind of preliminary work that is necessary to proceed with the pipeline. We are prepared to proceed with that.

We are also prepared to have some discussions with people in the area, which the member will be encouraging and arranging, and I hope we can come to a solution, because I share the member's concern and most certainly the member for Chatham-Kent's concern that there be appropriate water.

The member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore would also note that the drinking water surveillance program in Ontario has indicated that whenever

that testing has been done, the water meets all of the—

The Speaker: Order.

ONTARIO HOME RENEWAL PROGRAM FOR DISABLED PERSONS

Mr Sterling: I have a question of the Minister of Housing.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Sterling: I have a constituent who, believe it or not, has—

Interjections.

Mr Sterling: This is not a laughing matter, unfortunately.

I have a constituent who, believe it or not, has not been able to take either a bath or a shower in over eight months. This gentleman is a quadriplegic who does not have any access to the bathroom in his home and can only access his bedroom by removing the foot pedals from his wheelchair.

I would like to ask the minister what her plans are for hundreds of people, 200 in eastern Ontario alone, who have applied for assistance under the Ontario home renewal program for disabled persons, have received the first-stage approval—in other words, have been led to believe they are going to get the money to modify their accommodations to enable access—and have been left in abeyance.

This person, who is watching today, has been waiting for over—

The Speaker: Order. The question has been asked.

Hon Ms Hošek: I think that the story the member tells is a story we have to respond to. There are in fact many disabled persons across this province and the Ontario home renewal program for the disabled was created to help them to stay in their own homes and to give them the amenities they need so that they can live there appropriately. The story the member tells is, of course, very disturbing.

Originally, the amount of money that was budgeted for this program was about \$1.5 million. In the last few years we have increased that to \$7.5 million and a large number of people have been helped.

There are clearly some people on the waiting list right now. I expect the member opposite to get some information about this in due course. We are very aware of the problem, very concerned about it, and committed to making

sure that people who need help to make sure that their housing suits them will get that help.

Mr Sterling: I accept the minister's sincerity in her answer, but this government has raised expectations for the disabled community to get this kind of help.

Since the program has not been funded for at least the past six months, I would like to ask the minister the following questions: Why have the applicants been held in abeyance waiting for access to their washrooms, to their bedrooms or whatever? Why have they not received a refusal months ago so that they might make other arrangements if they are able to do so? Why were they not told to proceed with their renovations—

The Speaker: Thank you. Order. Would the member take his seat? That is three questions.

Hon Ms Hošek: The member opposite, since he has clearly been following this issue—I know that he has—will know that our program has already helped 750 people who need help to live in their homes. There are other programs we also have that are available to them to help with making their homes suitable. One of them is the convert-to-rent program and another is the low-rise rehabilitation program.

Let me just repeat to the member: Our commitment to helping the people who have applied for that program is there, and I hope the member will be hearing good news about this soon.

1450

LAND REGISTRATION

Ms Collins: My question is for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Like other areas of the province, my riding of Wentworth East is experiencing tremendous growth in terms of new housing developments, and this rapid growth is expected to continue over the next few years. Many developers have approached me about the length of time it takes the ministry to process land title applications. As the minister knows, delays in this procedure impact on both buyers and developers, as the question of ownership can delay closings. Could the minister inform the House of the steps he has taken to alleviate this problem?

Hon Mr Wrye: I thank the honourable member for the question. I note that she alluded in her preamble to the fact that the unprecedented growth in all parts of the province is causing the kinds of problems the member outlines which are occurring in the riding of Wentworth East.

We have put in place a number of changes as a result of an effort to get rid of the backlog in the titles application area by the end of the year, and I say to the honourable member we are going to do everything to make sure we do that. We are adding staff; we are streamlining the process; we have brought some people in on a contract basis, and we are bringing in some new equipment which will allow us to get on with that job.

I acknowledge to the honourable member and to the House that this growth has caused a backlog in a number of areas throughout the land registration system, but the government and this ministry are committed to a significant improvement, particularly in the area which the honourable member speaks of.

Ms Collins: The minister has announced a new computerized information system for developers. This system at present serves Metropolitan Toronto and area. When will this very important service be available to the rest of the province?

Hon Mr Wrye: The automation proposal under way through Polaris, the province of Ontario land registration and information system, has taken place on a pilot basis, as the honourable member points out, and is now under way in two of the three offices in Toronto and in Chatham as well. In terms of her area, I can say to the honourable member that Hamilton-Wentworth is due to be included in the project at the beginning of phase 2, I believe, which is right now scheduled to begin in 1992.

However, as the member knows, we have put out a request for proposal for a joint venture with the private sector, and that is designed to do two things: to speed up the automation process—to speed up the Polaris project—and at the same time to develop a huge export market for this very important land registration and information system. The evaluation is now under way; the project should be in place by the end of this month. Hopefully, over time that will speed up the phasing in of these projects and bring the kind of system to Hamilton-Wentworth that the member hopes for, perhaps before 1992.

FARM SAFETY

Mr D. S. Cooke: I have a question of the Minister of Labour. On 24 February, Chou Kim, a 32-year-old woman, was killed at Highline Produce in south Essex. She was killed on the job. The minister will know about this case from several letters that I have written to him. He will also understand that even though the worker was working in a greenhouse which is not unlike a

factory, there was no investigation by the Ministry of Labour, occupational health and safety branch, and there has been no inquest called by the coroner. The minister will understand all of this because this worker was not covered by his act because she was considered a farm worker.

Is the minister also aware that in the one investigation that does get carried out by the Farm Safety Association, funded entirely by the Workers' Compensation Board, the report is delivered to the owners of the company, not shared with the other employees and not even shared with the family or made public? Does he think that is appropriate?

Hon Mr Sorbara: The member points to the fact that historically in the province, since the earliest regulation of health and safety, agriculture has not been covered within the purview of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. In fact, farming operations, even though some of those operations are very farming-like, are not subject to the rules, regulations and statutes under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Historically, that has been the case.

I should tell my friend the member for Windsor-Riverside that a recent effort by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Farm Safety Association has reviewed that matter, and I look forward to their reports and comments in the near future.

Mr D. S. Cooke: I understand the law. The minister should be apologizing in this place for the lack of protection of farm workers across this province, and in particular for this death, but the specific question I am asking him comes out of the pledge of confidentiality that the Farm Safety Association has to employers in this province.

I am asking the minister in this case and in all future cases, will he change the rules so that the reports and investigations carried out by the Farm Safety Association are made public, so that the workers can understand what happened and so that the family can understand what happened and to prevent deaths like this again in the farm community?

Hon Mr Sorbara: Let me just assure my friend from Windsor that I will take the suggestion that he makes seriously and consider it.

However, when he asks me whether in the future I will ensure that accidents or indeed tragic fatalities like the one he has mentioned were investigated, or the reports prepared by the Farm Safety Association will be made public, I just

want to tell him that those reports and that organization are not within my jurisdiction.

Nevertheless, it is a matter that gives me some great concern for a number of reasons, including the fact that the historical reality of the separation of farming from industrial health and safety, mining health and safety and construction health and safety goes back to the days when farming was characterized primarily by small family institutions. There is an industrial component now that presents us, as a government, with significantly different issues.

On the matter that he raises, I just want to undertake to examine his suggestion very carefully and get back to him in the course of the investigations that are going on.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mrs Cunningham: My question is to the Solicitor General. The minister stated last July, with regard to Bill 113, the Sunday shopping legislation:

"This proposed legislation provides a province-wide law that requires most retailers to close on Sundays. Furthermore, it makes this requirement stricter, fairer and more enforceable than the old law."

We are aware of 100 cases outstanding in the Mississauga area against retailers who are opening now on Sundays. Is the minister aware of this, and if she is, what is her government going to do about these violations?

Hon Mrs Smith: The member for London North well knows that Mississauga has its own police force. We have put an act in place which they can make use of. I assume that the stores which are being discriminated against by these illegal openings will make their complaints known to the police force and demand action from them.

Mrs Cunningham: We were well warned by the municipalities during the summer that this new legislation would not be more enforceable and, in fact, that they would need a great deal of support in enforcing it. Now the mayor of Mississauga has advised us that these violations are far down on the lists in the courts to be dealt with. They have not been dealt with at all.

Furthermore, the municipalities are needing a great deal of dollars in order to enforce legislation. There were two clouts; larger fines was one of them, and the power of injunction was the other. We see no evidence that the new legislation is more enforceable than the old. What is the minister going to tell the public about that?

Hon Mrs Smith: As the mayor of Mississauga well knows, there was a great lineup in the courts on these issues before. They were not making progress. When they did get there, very small fines were being issued. Under the new law, proper fines will and should be issued. In fact, the law requires the court to look at the volume of sales and give proper fines. As well as that, of course, the diligence of the police in laying charges and working into the injunctive clause is in their hands. The law includes this and they have the power to use it.

1500

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Mr Kozyra: My question is for the Minister of the Environment. As the minister is aware, the Environmental Assessment Board hearing on timber management is presently being held in Thunder Bay. I am encouraged by the progress being made to improve forest management practices and reforestation. I am also glad to see a large part of the hearing is being held in Thunder Bay, given that the outcome of the board's deliberations on the timber management agreement will affect communities throughout the north.

My question is this: Has any consideration been given to the prospect of the board visiting other northern communities to give them an opportunity to contribute to this most important issue?

Hon Mr Bradley: That is an excellent question because the board, I know, always wants to ensure accessibility for people across the province in terms of hearings. That is within the purview of the board and not of the minister.

I can tell the member that approximately 60 parties have indicated their willingness to participate in this hearing so far, which is very encouraging. Although the bulk of the hearings will be held in Thunder Bay, which one might expect would be normal, the board will also be travelling, I think, to somewhere around 14 different communities to hear presentations from those who are unable to make the presentation in Thunder Bay. I could go on and list these communities, but in the interests of brevity in this House, I would not want to go into the long list, except to say that this will be taking place and that we are encouraging people to participate in this process.

The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr Kerrio) would tell everyone that we cannot think of another jurisdiction which is undertaking such a comprehensive review of its forest management

practices as is Ontario. We want to hear from everyone out there. We want to ensure that the final product that is forthcoming from this is one that is going to improve upon what we are already doing at the present time so that, once again, Ontario can be a leader in this and other fields.

Mr Kozyra: I thank the minister for that. I understand that many thoughtful and constructive presentations have been made by all the parties to the board to date, in particular the citizen and native community interveners.

I understand the government provided \$300,000 in intervener funding to assist those parties to present their cases. Given that the hearing is more complex than expected and that the Ministry of Natural Resources will soon complete its testimony, I would like to ask if the government will provide additional intervener funding in order to ensure a continuance of these kinds of quality presentations for the duration of the hearing.

Hon Mr Bradley: I would indicate to many of the people here today who may not be aware of it that Forests of Tomorrow, which is a coalition of five environmental groups, has received \$134,000; the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, \$76,000; the Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association, \$29,000; Grand Council Treaty 3, \$47,000; Red Lake-Ear Falls-Golden Municipal Commission, \$9,100; Beardmore-Lake Nipigon Watch Dog Society, \$2,400, and individuals some \$90,000.

Obviously these hearings are going on for a longer period of time because more people want to make representations. I can assure this member, who has a great interest in this, as do all members of this House of course, that it is the intention of the government of Ontario to provide some additional intervener funding. The Minister of Natural Resources and I are both working on this particular package. I expect that in the very near future we will make the kind of announcement that everyone in the province will be pleased with once again.

Mr Reville: If the minister had had a larger telephone book, this question period would have been over.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

Mr Reville: My question is to the Minister of Health. It says in the throne speech that the government is going to address specialty care needs in areas such as emergency services. Given that promise in the throne speech, I want to ask why the Ministry of Health has instituted a policy that vacancies created by vacations, sick days

and other employee absences in connection with air ambulance attendants are not going to be filled which, in my view and in the view of the attendants, leaves the Ministry of Health in the position of breaking the regulations of the Ambulance Act.

Hon Mrs Caplan: I think it is very important for the critic from the opposition party to know that there are standards of care and performance in all of the contracts with air ambulance operators which they are required to meet. I would say to him that I will ensure that those requirements are met.

Mr Reville: I am very relieved to hear the answer of the minister. Just so that she ensures that she meets the correct regulations, I think she needs to know that as of today emergency medical care assistants have been advised that they may have to work alone. Regulation 57 and regulation 58 of the Ambulance Act indicate that they must work with a qualified partner. That is the situation in the north. I think it is inappropriate to apply a different standard in northern Ontario than in southern Ontario. I want this minister to assure us that that policy will be revoked today.

Hon Mrs Caplan: I think it is important for the member opposite and for all members of the House to know that in the provision of emergency services there are different codes that are responses, some which are true emergencies and others which are not given the same emergency status.

I want to assure the member and all members of this House that all code 3 and code 4 emergencies will be covered by two-man teams.

SALE OF GOVERNMENT LANDS

Mr J. M. Johnson: My question is to the the Minister of Government Services. You may recall, Mr Speaker, that on Thursday, 2 March, exactly two months ago, I addressed a question to the Chairman of Management Board concerning the sale of certain government-owned land in the city of Cambridge.

Unable to answer my question at that time, the Chairman of Management Board gave his assurance that he would gladly look into the matter and consult with the Minister of Government Services concerning the sale. I assume that consultation has taken place, but I have to date not received a reply either from the Chairman of Management Board or the Minister of Government Services.

I would now, therefore, like to restate my question. On 22 February, the Minister of

Government Services announced the sale of 185 acres of land in the city of Cambridge for \$4.4 million, or about \$24,000 per acre, reportedly \$12 million below its true market value.

Can the minister now tell the House if an appraised value of this land was obtained at the time of sale; did this government sell the land at less than its true market value; and if so, by how much?

Hon Mr Patten: In fact, I recall the question the member did ask at that time. I will put this in writing for him. I did ask my officials if they would check into the figures that were stated. They checked back with the city of Cambridge. The people at the department he refers to indeed said they had talked about a figure, but the figure they quoted was the market value, in their estimation, of land that would be serviced.

The land we have at this particular point is not serviced land. We always get a third-party appraisal of land before we sell it in order to arrive at the value of what that is. In this particular instance, yes, we did. If the member would like the information, I would be very happy to share that with him.

PETITIONS

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION

Mr Pelissero: "To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that all teachers who retired prior to 31 May 1982 have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than at the present seven or 10 years.

"This proposed amendment would make the five-year criteria applicable to all retired teachers and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

My name is signed at the bottom.

Mr Pollock: I have a petition signed by 125 people, which reads as follows:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that all teachers who retired prior to 31 May 1982 have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than at the present seven or 10 years.

"This proposed amendment would make the five-year criteria applicable to all retired teachers

and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

It is signed by myself.

Mrs Grier: I have a petition addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that all teachers who retired prior to 31 May 1982 have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than at the present seven or 10 years.

"The proposed amendment would make the five-year criteria applicable to all retired teachers and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

This petition is signed by 193 teachers in the city of Etobicoke and I have initialled it to indicate my support.

1510

EXTENDED CARE

Mr McCague: I have a petition for the Lieutenant Governor in Council and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, signed by 61 persons from my riding in the Collingwood area, which reads in part as follows:

"I believe that all residents of extended care facilities, whether it be a nursing home or a municipal home for the aged, are entitled to equal care and services according to the specific care requirements of each individual.

"Nursing home residents should benefit from the same amount of funding and kinds of services as residents of municipal homes for the aged.

"I urge the Ontario government to reform the extended care system so that it is uniform, fair and equitable with regard to funding and regulation, and so that seniors in all extended care facilities receive the quality of care that they deserve."

The Speaker: I just remind all members that there are certain rules for petitions. They should not be addressed to the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

561239 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 1989

Mr Chiarelli moved first reading of Bill Pr10, An Act to revive 561239 Ontario Inc., 1989.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Mr Brandt: I am delighted to have this opportunity to respond to the throne speech on behalf of my party and to perhaps offer for the government's consideration, as I speak to this matter for the next few moments, some thoughts, ideas, and perhaps even suggestions and recommendations on how it might clean up its act and perform in a somewhat more acceptable manner in terms of what the people of this province have grown accustomed to expecting in terms of good government.

I would like to say that this throne speech continues on with the Liberal tradition of what is important to say as opposed to what is important for a government to do. It in many instances takes editorial licence by rewriting history and recycling broken promises. It makes a host of new promises that are incorporated in the speech, as limited as this speech was, without consideration of any cost or any difficulties of implementation.

I find it very difficult in some instances to argue with the promises that are made, because by and large they are attractive political objectives. I use the words "political objectives" because I think you have to separate that which is political from that which is in fact affordable.

Through the course of my remarks, I am going to try to separate that which is promised by one level of government and that which is to be paid for without consultation or negotiation by another level of government, the end result being that one level of government comes up with a host of new and sometimes attractive ideas, while simply shifting the burden of payment on to another level of government. I will lay before this Legislative Assembly proof positive that this is exactly what is happening.

My favourite promise, if you will, the one that perhaps really did not get the attention it deserved in this throne speech, is the one that said, "If you move to Ontario, fortunately, you are going to live longer." It was an interesting sentence in the throne speech, which by any measurement was the shortest throne speech in the history of this province, a throne speech that in fact contained fewer promises.

I believe this government took stock of what happened in previous throne speeches. The

government took stock of what happened with respect to certain criticisms that were being levelled at it in consideration of its nonperformance on certain issues in the past. They decided, "Well, the best thing for us to do is to really reduce the number of promises we are going to make, and therefore we will give the opposition fewer targets to fire at." I think that is really what happened with the thrust of this throne speech.

The key members of this government sat around a board table and decided they had their bellies full, if you will, of criticisms that were coming from the media, consulting groups and others who were observers of the political process and who came to the very specific position in connection with the performance of this government that it had in fact missed the mark on a number of very key and important issues.

What was said in terms of the bottom line by so many people who understand this process all too well was that this government had no agenda, that this government really had lost its sense of objectivity in terms of where it was going. I think the most damning of all the observations was that this government had really no focus.

It said that in part because the government had been preoccupied essentially with two issues: Those issues were Sunday shopping and free trade. All other issues really fell by the wayside while the government attempted to put into place its defence on those particular matters. Those two issues really dominated the last session in terms of the time they took, the energy and the commitment from the government opposite.

When the government in the throne speech actually had the unmitigated gall to suggest that if you move to Ontario you are going to live longer, I guess it conveniently forgot what has been happening to our health system here in Ontario. I guess they conveniently forgot that waiting lists are getting longer, that it is getting more difficult to get procedures carried out in hospitals, that doctors and nurses and health providers, both in the community setting and in the institutions that provide health care in the province, are getting more and more frustrated.

But when, in the throne speech, it talked about people living longer in Ontario, I guess the great explorer, Ponce de Léon had it wrong back in the 17th century when he searched for the fountain of youth in what is today Florida. He was a few thousand miles south of where he should have been, and a few centuries early. Who would have guessed that the fountain of youth, the cause of so many quests, once thought lost to mankind for

ever, would be finally discovered in, of all places, that northern Utopia, that Garden of Eden that has only come to be realized in the last four years through the current government, and of course, was highlighted in its 1989 throne speech.

1520

But there it is in black and white, "Move to Ontario." I ask my colleagues, are we not pleased that we are here? "Move to Ontario and you will get to live longer." There are many other promises made in the throne speech, but they are not quite as sweeping in scale as the one about living longer if you are a resident of this great province of ours, but unfortunately—I am being as fair as I can—some of those promises are equally guilty of being less than fully truthful in terms of what they will deliver to the people of this province.

As I see it, there were two main components to the speech, once one strips aside the rhetoric of motherhood and good intentions.

The first of those thrusts in the throne speech was the government's newly found and supposed commitment to education. If I might, in the time that is allowed to me this afternoon, I want to spend a considerable period on the whole question of education in Ontario, because I believe this government is again out of focus and out of touch and is losing its sense of purpose as it relates to education in our province.

As an example, the government states it intends to introduce kindergarten for four-year-olds and five-year-olds and that it intends to re-emphasize the need for core curriculum for older students. It intends doing so, according to the throne speech, because of the need to build for the future of our children.

I cannot think of a better example of where this government has failed so miserably in translating words into action than in the field of education. In doing so, it has failed the very children whose futures it says it is so concerned about. Let's look at the facts as they relate to education in this province, and not at false promises, public relations efforts, glossy brochures and pamphlets, splashy announcements and idle rhetoric.

On 28 March 1985—my colleagues will remember that date well—just before a provincial election, it was this government that promised to increase provincial subsidies and provincial transfers to local school boards to 60 per cent from the level it was at that particular time, which was in the range of 47 per cent. It was a very acceptable kind of target, I think, that the previous government was aiming for as well. It

was an acceptable kind of target in that for educational financing covered by the province, I believe the peak figure was some 61 per cent at one particular point in time.

What has happened is not only that this promise of 60 per cent was not met—boards of education of course were very discouraged and very frustrated by that right across this province—but that there was an actual absolute decline from 47 per cent to 42 per cent. That may not sound like a lot to some people in this assembly, but I want to tell members that a five per cent reduction in the amount of support base for educational purposes amounts to hundreds of millions of dollars right across this province.

What is even more discouraging in connection with those particular figures—that reduction, that erosion of support for education, the very pillar upon which this throne speech is constructed—is the fact that if the government cannot meet the 60 per cent requirement for educational purposes, if it cannot raise or elevate the 47 per cent the current government inherited to 60 per cent, and if it finds itself in an absolute decline of some five per cent or more, then what it does is change the formula.

The Minister of Education (Mr Ward) stands up in righteous indignation and says: “Well, the members of the opposition are wrong. We in fact are funding more because you see what we are doing is changing the way in which we base the formula. We are giving you money in this program or that program.” But in terms of general support grants, which was what the target figure was based on, that number is in absolute, real decline.

The way the government gets around this, in quite the same way as it talks about how one is going to live longer in Ontario, is to simply change the formula. I take issue with that because I believe it is misleading; I believe it is less than honest, and I choose my words carefully. I say it is less than honest because we did have a formula that was reasonably acceptable to all members of this House. It very clearly determined what was required in terms of programming for the educational systems in the various school boards across this province. This government back in 1985 indicated that what would be fair would be provincial subsidies about the 60 per cent level. Well, did they deliver that? The answer, quite clearly, is no.

Not only did they not deliver that, but they did not even maintain the level of funding they used to criticize with such a great degree of enthusiasm when they were on the other side of the

House. They used to indicate how unacceptable it was that the government of the day had allowed the erosion of funding all the way down to 47 per cent. If it was bad to go down to 47 per cent, I guess it has to be catastrophic to go down to some 42 per cent; and I might add virtually in free fall in terms of the way in which that grant subsidy has been handled.

Hon Mr Conway: Will somebody reign in this profligate spender? He's going to defeat every Tory fiscal policy imaginable.

Mr Brandt: The government House leader interjects by indicating that I am talking about spending more money. By way of clarification, since it may be difficult for the government House leader to understand, although I am speaking slowly and I think rather succinctly as it relates to this particular issue, I am recalling for his information a promise made by his government.

They are the ones who said they were going to increase the funding to that level. They are the ones who showed absolutely no consideration whatever for what the cost of that program was. I want to tell them that kind of theme finds its way through announcement after announcement on that side of the House when it comes to housing policy, environmental policy, day care services, education and municipal programs.

Time and again they make announcements, and I say this as charitably as I know how, because I have a great deal of respect and admiration for the talents and abilities of the government House leader.

Mr Cureatz: I wouldn't go that far.

Mr Brandt: Well, I withdraw that.

Mr Cureatz: I feel better now; that's right.

Mr Brandt: I got carried away for a moment there. On a personal basis I like the government House leader, but I want to say to him that it is not acceptable in a responsible government that it simply think up these attractive political programs, make announcements either in throne speeches and/or in budgets or in ministerial dictates that will come from on high over the course of the next 12 months, and then expect somebody else to pick up the cost of those programs.

Let me give the members another promise in the education field that was made by the current government, on 22 April 1986. This was in another throne speech, I might add. The government promised to establish a high school in the north. My colleague the member for Nipissing (Mr Harris) will remember this well. That high

school was to be dedicated to science and technology, another promise that was made. The truth of the matter is that three years later, we do not hear about that promise any more, I say to the member for Nipissing.

Here we are with a problem area in our province, an area where there is a real decline in jobs, an area that is struggling to maintain the population and the workforce and the kinds of communities there at the present time, where they need some government assistance in order to strengthen, if you will, the economic fibre of those communities. Many of those communities, as we all well know, are dependent upon a single industry, either the pulp and paper industry or the mining industry, and if that industry goes, in many instances the entire community is literally without any hope of providing employment for its citizens.

The government made a commitment to provide a high school in that particular area that would fill part of the need and perhaps strengthen and reinforce the very fine communities we have in the north. Then after they made the promise, they turned their backs completely on what was a good idea, and maybe it is a good thing they did because the experience in the past was that they will make the announcement and somebody else will pay. That is what they have done time and time and time again, and it is just not acceptable.

We never hear about the high school in the north that is going to be able to provide the science and technology programs for the students of that particular area who need it so badly.

1530

On 28 April 1987 there was another Liberal throne speech. This one came just before an election, so that makes it a very interesting one. The government promised to adopt an improved literacy program in teacher training. It promised to give priority to ensure that students attain both traditional and new literacy in science and computer skills. The truth behind that promise and the fact is that no action was taken.

In November 1987 there was another Liberal throne speech in which the government promised to increase the number of computers in classrooms and to increase the amount of educational software. The total pricetag of that program was rather staggering. I remember at the time that this was a program that was originally initiated by a previous government. Moving into that kind of new technology, that kind of state-of-the-art instruction if you will, on that type of equipment was deemed to be a very necessary, a needed tool for the educational field in our province.

So we endorsed the move to accelerate the process that was going to provide more money for computer equipment and, therefore, for the advancement and betterment of computer skills, a necessary piece of equipment in today's advanced society. We applauded the government's initiatives in that respect. There was a pricetag on that of \$650 million.

Hon Mr Conway: Andy, you know, if you guys had left Bette Stephenson alone, you would have had a good program, but Grossman just screwed it up.

Mr Brandt: The truth behind that promise—and I say this directly to the government House leader who recalls the fond days when the Honourable Bette Stephenson was in this House and provided a good, solid, understandable level of education in which the boards could anticipate what their level of funding would be right across this province and in which there were no surprises, such as his government constantly comes up with—let's talk about this \$650-million promise his government made.

The fact is that the government has spent—are members ready for this? My colleagues are going to be staggered by this particular figure. The total amount of money the government has committed to this particular program is \$27 million, over \$620 million short of what it promised. Here again we have government rhetoric, the government making statements and promises and laying before the public a new program it is going to introduce and then backing away from that as quickly as it possibly can.

The list goes on and on. We have been cataloguing these to try to match what the government is delivering with what the government promised. At last count, in fact, this government's education promises alone, those promises made and broken, now total some \$3 billion.

Mr Villeneuve: Three billion?

Mr Brandt: My colleagues ask: "Is it that high? Is it really \$3 billion?" I assure them that it is. I assure them that about half of that \$3 billion is caught up just in making the adjustment to the 60 per cent funding base this government promised in years past which it is now backing off from as rapidly as it knows how.

That \$3 billion was money that was promised to be spent on programs, but it was spent only on headlines to make the people of this province believe that something was being done in education. If the government talks about it and repeats it a sufficient number of times, some people will believe there is actually some action

going on in the education field. I can tell members that action is not going on.

This leads me to the latest throne speech, the short throne speech, probably the shortest on record and the one that is supposed to focus on a few key areas of concern. In the latest so-called commitment to education, we know this price that I am about to mention does not even include the startup costs for the particular program, which will be in the area of \$200 million of additional funding, again from this government.

Even when we have determined that it is going to cost some \$200 million to introduce the kindergarten program into Ontario, there is no mention whatever on the part of the government as to who is going to pay. Yet they wonder why the boards of education across this province are becoming very, very discouraged and very frustrated.

Let me tell the Liberal government what it has done in the past, and this is part of that \$3-billion package. I can recall back in, I believe 1987 when the government indicated that it had this new program for education in which it was going to reduce classroom sizes in grades 1 and 2. I do not think there is anyone in this assembly who would take issue with the reduction of classroom sizes, as long as it is affordable and as long as the level of government that makes the promise, namely the province, carries out its responsibilities and pays for it.

But there were a series of problems related to that particular announcement, because once again the government did not think through too carefully the implications of what that program promise really was going to carry with it. First of all, I say to the members of the government who are in attendance this afternoon that, if you in fact take two classes of 60 and aim for the government's objective of reducing that to an average of 20, there are three things that automatically flow out of that particular action: (1) you need another classroom, (2) you are going to need another teacher and (3) you have to answer the question, "Who is going to pay?"

On the question of classroom space, let me remind the government members that when they sat in opposition, there was little that angered them in such an intense fashion, there was little that upset them in such a dramatic way as the problem of students in portables. Surely the honourable House leader's memory goes back far enough; that grey cranium of his certainly has not festered away so badly as he sits there in government that he cannot remember the time when he used to stand up in righteous indignation

and talk to us in such burning tones, talk so seriously about the way in which our educational system was collapsing because we had close to 100,000 students in portable classrooms.

Now, I say to the honourable House leader, time has passed and we have all these new initiatives and new announcements by the government, and during the interim period, guess what has happened? What has happened is we have more than doubled—can he believe this?—the number of students in portables. We now have some 200,000 students in this province who are in portable classrooms. That is simply not acceptable.

Not only might I say that the government has aggravated the number of students in portable classrooms and aggravated the problem by increasing the number, but also it has introduced new programs that are going to cause even more difficulties for school boards, as a result of its kindergarten announcement and as a result of trying to fulfil the announcement of a couple of years ago when it was going to reduce classroom sizes in grades 1 and 2.

That brings me to the whole question of who pays. I have had the occasion, during the course of the break this assembly took, to travel around the province and to talk to people who are close to the educational system. I have also talked to people in the health system, our health providers, and to people in municipal governments.

One of the interesting things I have found in these travels that I have taken is that people are growing increasingly frustrated and, I might add, angry at this government's consistent program of constantly dreaming up new ideas and then simply passing them on.

In the case of school boards, one of the things they are saying to me, and they are making this very clear in terms of their concerns, is that they are having to get rid of programs that have been traditional and historic in their systems. They have to get rid of those programs because they cannot afford them, in order to take on the new initiatives this government dreams up virtually on a daily basis.

1540

Hon Mr Conway: Can you name any examples, Andy?

Mr Brandt: Yes, I can. One of the programs they are having great difficulty in funding is the francophone program in some of our schools, because the government has only provided partial funding for those programs.

Another program that is being shifted aside, in response to the House leader, is the computer

program. Do members know that there are schools that ordered computers in anticipation of receiving grants from this government that had to turn around and send those computers back because the government broke its promise?

Hon Mr Conway: In which locale? I'd like to follow up on that.

Mr Brandt: Well, the member asked me for examples of programs that are not being fulfilled and carried out, and I gave him specific examples; there is an entire agenda of those kinds of difficulties.

But the most insidious thing that is happening as a result of these transfers is that it becomes increasingly obvious that this government has lost sight of the fact that every time it initiates one of these new schemes and passes on the cost to a local school board or, in some other instances a local municipality, the cost then becomes a burden on local property taxes.

The cost then becomes one of the home owner, and particularly those who are on limited or marginal incomes, our senior citizens and others who are having difficulty remaining in their homes, are being increasingly burdened by an insensitive government that apparently has absolutely no understanding of the cause and effect relationship between the things it is introducing into this assembly on a regular basis.

I have to tell members that many of the school boards across this province are saying: "Enough is enough. If you intend to introduce the program, then you pay for it. If you intend to come up with a new initiative, then you take the responsibility for providing the funding."

I do not see that that is such a radical departure from the kind of relationship that this government and former governments have had with their working partners at the municipal and local level in the past. This is not such a radical proposal, that the government should negotiate, consult and work with on a co-operative basis those very people who are delivering those programs at the local level.

I find it just a little less than acceptable that this is what has been going on with this government, and in the limited amount of time available to me today, I am going to identify a whole host of things that this government has introduced where it has not carried out its responsibilities in an appropriate fashion by paying the bills.

I want to show members what is happening in a matter of some personal interest to me, because I was involved in this back a few years ago when I was a member of the cabinet. I had some more than passing interest in a matter known as acid

rain reduction. I want to shift, if I might, to the whole question of environment for a moment. I am disappointed that the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley) has taken leave. Perhaps he should, because I will not be particularly supportive of his ministry when I make some of my comments, which were not covered in any great depth, I might add, in this recent throne speech.

But one more time the rhetoric does not match the performance of the government; the rhetoric being one thing, the promises being one thing and the action and the actual delivery of a program being an entirely different thing. I chose environment as one of the measures I wanted to talk about, because I want to show the government how it can fool some of the people some of the time, but I do not believe it can fool all of the people all of the time. I think that will catch up with this government in the not too distant future.

Let me give the newer members of this assembly, those who were elected in 1987, a little history lesson in terms of what has happened in the environmental field. They may even want to take notes of this in case they want to throw these back at me at some future point.

In March 1984, Ontario and the other five eastern provinces of Canada got together in Fredericton, New Brunswick, to discuss some new initiatives as they related to an environmental control program that would bring under control sulphur dioxide emissions, SO₂ emissions. Those particular toxins, as members know, contribute very dramatically to the incidence of acid rain which we are trying to bring under control, primarily in eastern Canada but in other parts of our country as well, and in sensitive parts of Ontario where it is particularly devastating.

We had the introduction, some time later, of a program that was announced with great fanfare, called the Countdown Acid Rain program. There were many who thought that the Countdown Acid Rain program was a brand-new initiative, that this was a new thrust by the Ministry of the Environment and that this was going to create a much cleaner environment as a result of the program that was going to be brought into being by the member for St Catharines (Mr Bradley), the current Minister of the Environment.

In March 1984, what was agreed upon by the six eastern provinces, the five plus Ontario, was that we would use the 1980 base year for our statistical review and that we would agree upon a 50 per cent global reduction in acid rain as a result of reducing sulphur dioxide emissions

through the various major sources throughout eastern Canada.

We further agreed that those cuts would be made recognizing that there was a period of technological catching-up that had to be done. There was new technology that had to be introduced and new machinery that had to be put on site. There were various options that had to be taken into account over a period, roughly that 10-year period from 1984 to 1994. So realistically, it was felt that we could not bring in more than a 50 per cent reduction any more quickly than in that 10-year period, which would end in 1994.

The point I want to make in connection with the Countdown Acid Rain program is that it was not a new initiative. It was not essentially much different from what had been introduced a couple of years earlier by an earlier government, where substantial and very dramatic cuts in acid rain had already taken place. What it did was up the ante a little bit.

Let me tell members how small the increased reductions are when put in the context of what was originally proposed back in March 1984. I want to say to the House leader that I was a party to those meetings, and there was absolutely no program, no agreement, very little that had been done by the Trudeau government federally at that particular time.

I remember the House leader's friend and mine, the honourable Charles Caccia, who was the Minister of the Environment, who came to that particular conference and put not one dime on the table to help with those cuts. With all the talk, all the rhetoric, all the expanded chest that was brought to that meeting in terms of being puffed up with the importance of the federal government's involvement, did it contribute financially in any substantive way? Not at all.

Members know what happened. Virtually all the provinces were prepared to lock away their suitcases, their briefcases and their briefing notes and to walk out of that meeting, but I want to tell the members with some degree of modesty that there was a minister there who was the then Minister of the Environment. For the record the members may want to look up who that was. He is one of the few members of this Legislative Assembly who is now standing, but that is the last hint I will give.

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I want to tell members how that particular program unfolded, because I think it is important in a historic context. I really think it is important that members know that what this government's minister did pales in comparison with what was

done back in 1984. I say it pales in comparison because when one starts with a totally abstract concept, when one starts without any road map to follow to reach a particular objective, it is much more difficult than when one picks up the football at midfield and simply runs with it.

That program, I might add, virtually collapsed in March 1984 because of the lack of financial participation of the federal government. What kept that program together is that there were six or seven provincial ministers of the environment who said, "We have an obligation to do something about the problem." So it was after we had asked the federal Minister of the Environment to leave the room—we told him he had to get out of the room since he was not putting up any of the money—that we as provincial colleagues would sit down and work out a process, a formula that would reduce sulphur dioxide emissions.

That we did, and the amount was 50 per cent. Then we had one year to work out the specific reductions that would total a gross cut of some 2.3 million tons which was required at that time; we would, over a period of one year, decide the specific cuts for each individual province.

It is interesting to note that the responsibility of the province of Ontario totalled some 53 per cent. What did the present Minister of the Environment do with that 53 per cent? What he did on 17 December 1985 was to increase the total reductions that were already in place and that were already documented with signed agreements between the various levels of government by a total of seven per cent. That was the total initiative of this big announcement called the Countdown Acid Rain program.

When I talk about the difference between government rhetoric and government action, that is the kind of thing I refer to, where a government gets caught up in its own announcements and thinks it has a particularly important breakthrough, but it has already in fact been put in place by another government.

Mr Harris: Who was the parliamentary assistant who negotiated that?

Mr Brandt: I got rid of that parliamentary assistant. I forgot who that was, but he was from the north.

I want to talk about another announcement that was never fulfilled, a promise that was broken, another commitment made and a commitment not fulfilled. That was the perpetual care fund, which was not mentioned whatsoever in this throne speech.

It was particularly important for this government to indicate to the people of the province that

it was prepared to provide some \$30 million to clean up some of the closed-out landfill sites that were located throughout the province. As the member for Mississauga South (Mrs Marland), as the critic for the Environment, will well recall, we decided we were going to test the intentions of the government by bringing forward a bill which we would propose to this Legislative Assembly to see whether the government would support its own announcement.

The announcement that was made called for a \$30-million commitment, a perpetual care fund, an Americanized superfund that would be used to close off, seal up and render harmless any toxic, contaminated landfill sites that were located in various parts of the province. We applauded that move on the part of the government, endorsed it and supported it. We said, "Proceed with it because this is a very fine initiative and one that is needed by the province of Ontario."

What did the government do with its own promise of \$30 million to clean up those contaminated landfill sites? Did it fulfil its commitment? No. Did they even support their own promises when we brought forward a private bill? Is this government intent on cleaning up those sites even in the near future? Once again my friends have allowed their rhetoric to run well in advance of any actions they intend to take. I have to tell them that Liberal promises, whether a throne speech, a budget or a campaign promise, are simply not worth the paper they are written on.

I want to talk a little bit, if I might, about an opportunity I had this past Thursday to speak to our partners in government, those known as our municipal leaders, the members of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario; which is an organization, as we all know, that consists of some 800 communities right across this great province of Ontario, made up of many reeves, mayors and members of council, all of whom have an interest in delivering a good level of quality programs at the local level.

Hon Mr Conway: Where was that?

Mr Brandt: The honourable House leader wants to know where that particular meeting took place. I want to say to him it took place in the great riding of Sarnia. I want him to know that they were well treated and the hospitality that flowed from that particular gathering will be remembered for a long time. But that was not the important thing that occurred at that particular meeting.

I had an opportunity to speak to our local government leaders. As are the members of

boards of education across this province, the leaders of our municipal governments are joining in a chorus of condemnation of this government for making promises and dreaming up programs that it either does not deliver on or expects someone else to pay for.

Let me give members a few examples. It is interesting to recall the anger in the tone of voice of the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) when he indicated that the transfers from the federal government did not meet the kind of lofty expectations that our Ontario Treasurer anticipated from the Minister of National Revenue in Ottawa. He indicated he felt that these additional burdens that were being passed on to Ontario and other provinces across the country were going to cost more tax dollars in terms of the provincial government's budget.

It was interesting to note, when I took a look at that budget, that in fact what Mr Wilson did was slow down the rate of increase of these particular transfers. He simply slowed the rate of increase, which I agree under normal times would not be acceptable. But did he in fact pass on a zero increase?

Mr Cureatz: No.

Mr Brandt: No, he did not. Did he in fact, without any discussion with another level of government, decide quite arbitrarily, quite unilaterally, that another level of government was going to get absolutely no increase in a particular budget?

Mr Cureatz: Not one iota.

Mr Brandt: He did not do that. The fact of the matter is that I do not know how some members of the Legislative Assembly, who served so long and so well at the local levels of government, can sit over there and feel so insensitive and so uncaring about the fact that their municipal colleagues are simply having all of this burden shifted on to their backs.

Let me talk about some of the specifics. I know the members opposite do not like to hear specifics, because they would rather deal in generalities and perhaps attempt, in so doing, to confuse the people of Ontario, but I am going to deal with specifics. I am going to deal with programs like the unconditional grant program.

When I raised the question in this assembly with the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr Eakins), he said quite simply, "Municipalities are going to get more money." He just backhanded the question as though it were of no relevance and as though it were of no importance whatever. I can tell the members it is very, very important to municipal leaders. Unconditional grants are the

only moneys they have got to meet some of their local priorities. It is the only money they get from the government which is not targeted specifically to existing programs that are conditional and already in place.

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But did this government even take the time to go to the executive of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and to the members of that very long-established organization and say: "Look, we've got a financial crisis here. We can't meet our obligations. We're going to have to bite the bullet, and as partners in good government you're going to have to share with us part of the burden"? Not only did the government not do that, but interestingly enough its expenditures went up at double the rate of inflation. It not only did not give them what Michael Wilson gave it, but it gave them absolutely zero. That is unconscionable, it is unacceptable, and members opposite ought to be embarrassed that they are sitting over there giggling at it when they have passed on an increase in property taxes to every home owner in the province.

Have my friends looked at the horror stories in the local newspapers about tax increases that are accelerating just absolutely beyond belief? Then the government comes up with an announcement today. This was a real interesting one. I cannot find it here, but I remember it well. The average is about \$280 for senior citizens. The government is going to increase the support grant for seniors to help them with their property taxes.

Does the government know that if it checked back at the level of property taxes today, took the existing grant it is transferring to them and went back just a few short years, three or four years, what it would find is that the burden on our seniors to pay for educational costs in particular, which is what this grant was put in place for, to alleviate at least to a certain extent—

Mr Ballinger: Says who?

Mr Brandt: Says the government that brought it in when the member was wet behind the ears and was not even here, that is who said it. Because we were the ones who brought that grant in originally when the member did not even have the foggiest notion of what the Legislative Assembly was all about. The fact of the matter is that grant was brought in to ease the burden on senior citizens who were forced to pay both municipal and educational taxes. This grant was brought in for that purpose.

But has it made life easier for our seniors? The only way it could make life easier for our seniors is if the grant increased to the point where it was

taking away some of the dollars that would otherwise flow into property taxation, if it reduced the pressure on seniors having to pay that type of taxation. Has this grant done that? No. We support the concept of the grant, but it should be higher to help senior citizens. That is an absolute fact, particularly when the government continues to push more and more responsibility on to local taxpayers.

Let's pass the unconditional grants for the moment and let's see where the members of the government back benches stand when Bill 187—

Interjections.

Mr Brandt: Mr Speaker, I would remind you that certain members are not in their seats and are making it extremely difficult to be heard during the course of my remarks. If you would ask those members to take their seats, I would be most appreciative.

The Acting Speaker (Mr M. C. Ray): The member for Durham-York (Mr Ballinger) will sit in the appropriate seat. I remind all honourable members that the leader of the third party has the right to speak in an uninterrupted manner, even uninterrupted by members of his own party.

Mr Brandt: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Excuse me. The member for Middlesex on a point of order.

Mr Reycraft: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I note the member for Durham-York has now resumed his rightful seat in the Legislature. I would also ask you to note the fact that at least six members of the third party caucus are not sitting in their own seats.

Mr Brandt: Mr Speaker, by way of response, if I might, it is not uncommon for members of the party that is speaking at that particular moment to have its members sit close to the speaker. I see nothing inconsistent or inappropriate about that. I might suggest that they are not interjecting at the same volume level that certain other members were, making it virtually impossible to make any intelligent remarks in this House whatever.

The members may want to question the content of my speech, because I am going to say some things they perhaps do not want to hear, but I at least want to have the opportunity to be heard without that constant, incessant nattering that goes on across the way.

If I might, having covered at least partially, to the extent that I could shout over the comments opposite, and passing by the unconditional grant, I will go to a program which I believe the members of the government back benches will

have an opportunity for some input on, which is the court security act, Bill 187.

If they really doubt that what I am saying with respect to the pass-through costs of these programs is valid, then listen to the chiefs of police of Ontario, listen to the municipal councils of Ontario, listen to the people who are going to have to pay for this program, because what they have said, very clearly, is that under the direction being suggested by Bill 187, the court security act, court security will now become a municipal responsibility. It will now not only become the responsibility of local police forces, but the cost is going to be shifted on to those local municipalities and to their police budgets.

I have heard the Attorney General (Mr Scott) say that there are no additional costs associated with Bill 187; that the municipalities will simply be taking on the full responsibility of what they have been involved in in the past.

I have to suggest that is more than just a little bit misleading. It has been estimated that the program will cost millions of dollars in Toronto alone. In a community that is a relatively medium sized community in Ontario, North Bay, the cost is estimated at \$500,000. In the community of Chatham, the estimated cost is some \$200,000. In my own community, the cost is estimated at \$600,000. It goes on and on and on in all of the jurisdictions across this province, which are once again having a shift of responsibility and cost without any discussion and without any negotiation on the part of the two governments.

I spent 10 very enjoyable years as a member of council and as a mayor of a community by the name of Sarnia in this great province of ours. One of the things I came to appreciate was the opportunity to sit down with my provincial colleagues in government and talk about how we could better serve the interests of the people of Ontario, how we could cost-share programs and how we could work together to do that which was achievable, that which was possible.

The only way one can do that is with dialogue. The only way one can do that is with a very lengthy series of very tough meetings, in some instances, in order to work out the problems that are associated with so many of these programs and then determine what the costs are going to be and also determine what the share of those particular costs is going to be.

Has the government done that with the MISA program, the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement? The answer is no. Municipalities have no idea of how much it is going to cost. They have no idea of how they are going to come

up with the money in order to bring about environmental controls which they had no say whatsoever in putting in place.

I do not take issue with the MISA program. I think it is an excellent initiative. I like the program, but I have to ask the questions, particularly at a time when all governments are going to have perhaps a little less money to work with: Who is going to pay? Is it fair once again to say that here we have this new program with this new agenda of standards that have to be achieved, all of which we would like to see become a reality, and the municipalities are going to have to pay?

The city of London alone said the capital improvements in its sewage treatment plant are going to cost millions of dollars. But not only are the municipalities going to have to improve on their basic infrastructure, which will involve a capital investment, they are also going to be asked to monitor the effluent from industries within their jurisdictions, a responsibility that has historically been that of the Ministry of the Environment.

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I say that is wrong. They are going to have to train and put in place inspectors and people who will now go around and do the job that was previously done by the Ministry of the Environment.

I have some problems with those kinds of programs being shifted on to the local levels of government without any care or concern about what they are going to cost and how they are going to be paid for.

Other examples of this same sort of thing are happening when you look at transportation and roads programs. Municipalities are falling farther and farther behind because their grants are being cut back. Municipalities are becoming increasingly frustrated by having programs like the equal value programs brought into place by the government pushed on to local governments, without one single dime being provided to help with the cost of those programs.

I was chairman of the standing committee on administration of justice when we were dealing with equal pay for work of equal value and I can recall that there was a good level of debate within that committee. There was general agreement that we would work together to try to implement a program to bring about basic fundamental justice for women in the workforce. There was a strong feeling among all parties that we had a commitment to move in some uniform way in order to bridge the gap of the approximately 40

per cent differential between a woman's pay in the workforce and the pay that has historically been going to the men in our workforce.

We wanted to find some ways to reduce the margin of difference, so there was general agreement among all three parties that we would try to implement a program along the lines of an equal value program where there would be comparative jobs that would be taken into account. Without going into the history of how the program came into being, the fact of the matter is that all three parties were co-operating.

But once again there was a fundamental question raised during the course of the debates in that justice committee. That fundamental question was very basic and I think it was very simple: Who is going to pay? That has been the theme of my address when I talked about education, when I talked about the environment, when I talked about municipal grants. I asked the question time and again, because I think it is an important question: Who is going to pay?

There is not a single member of this assembly who could not come up with a good idea that government could implement, a good suggestion, a new initiative, something we would all like to see happen. We can all come up with a number of them, yet we all know in our heart of hearts that the problem is economics. The problem is one of financing; it is one of paying. The problem is one of being able to achieve that which is affordable and at the same time that which is fair and equitable in terms of arriving at the balances we need in our society.

I think this government has lost sight of that sense of fair play with local governments. They have lost sight of the fact that by simply shovelling off these responsibilities, passing them through to local municipalities, they are in fact shirking their own responsibility. I think they are going to find headline after headline, as I have seen recently, condemning this government for not carrying its fair share of the load. That is not me speaking, I might add. That is the word I am getting from municipal leader after municipal leader in all parts of the province. They are getting fed up with being told what to do, how to do it and when to do it, without being given the financial wherewithal to carry it out.

I am only going to digress for a moment on the question of taxation. I think, as the Leader of the Opposition (Mr B. Rae) stated yesterday—I was not, I regret and I apologized to him, in attendance for his speech, and he in turn apologized to me because he was not going to be able to be here this afternoon, but I did take the

time to watch his address on television late last night. He talked about, and I want to get his words as accurately as I can, the hypocrisy of elected people, on the one hand talking about needed programs, things we would all like to have happen, and then on the other hand saying we are going to cut taxes and reduce government expenditures.

It does not take a Houdini to understand that you cannot have it both ways, other than to apply in some instances better management and better administration. Maybe you can bring about some economic savings if you are effective in introducing programs in a fashion that has a greater impact for fewer dollars, and that can be done from time to time.

I took his words to heart very carefully when he talked about the fact that we cannot, on the one hand, talk about spending more and more, and on the other hand, talk about taxing less and less. On the question of taxation, I want to tell the members what I find so fundamentally wrong, so fundamentally evil if you will, about a government that dreams up these schemes and passes them on to local governments. It is the fact that for all intents and purposes, and by every political observer one could call into play to make some comment on this particular point, property taxation at the local level is the most regressive, unfair form of taxation devised by any level of government. It is simply not fair.

[Applause]

Mr Brandt: We are even getting some applause from the members of the government on that point, so we are in basic agreement on that. The reason that property taxes are regressive and that they are unfair is that they bear no relationship to a person's ability to pay. You can live in a very large house because you happen to have a large family or you can have a large lot size, yet you can live on a very modest income. That is, by definition, regressive taxation.

When local governments and school boards have no control over the mill rate that impacts on a home occupied by someone on a marginal income, we are effectively putting those people—I particularly put seniors in this category because many of them are on fixed incomes—in the untenable position of having to look elsewhere for some form of assistance, in addition to the paltry government grant given to seniors, in order to retain their sense of pride and their sense of importance as it relates to owning and living in their own homes.

That is a very important, fundamental right in our society, one our party wants to protect, one I

want to protect as the interim leader of our party and as an elected MPP. I want people to live in their own homes as long as it is humanly possible for them to so do. We believe in this party in private ownership, and we believe in this party in people having the right to occupy their own dwelling and to live in that dwelling without a great deal of undue government interference. That government interference, I might add, also relates to taxation because oppressive taxes can do a lot of very unkind things to people.

The question is one of balance. The question is one of achieving the necessary level of service delivery whether it be in health, education, transportation or social programs, whatever it might be, and at the same time—this is where we do, on occasion, have some differences between our parties—having a balance between having that level, that quality of program, and not allowing taxes to rise to such a level that they are going to take away, in some instances, a person's home, or in other instances, a person's initiative to want to continue to work hard in our society. When the province of Ontario recognizes full well that property taxes are regressive, why is it pushing so much of this tax burden down to the local level?

I will give another regressive form of taxation, and that is the provincial sales tax. Once again, the provincial sales tax does not reflect a person's ability to pay. Study after study has proved that particular tax impacts in a most harmful fashion on those at the lowest end of the income spectrum, because for all intents and purposes they have no choice over the purchases they make. People who are making modest incomes, who have a relatively low standard of living, are forced to buy, with that modest amount of money they have, the essentials in life, the things that need to get by on a day-to-day basis. That is what they use that money for. The sales tax impacts on those people in a much more harmful fashion than it will on someone who is at the upper end of the income spectrum.

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What form of tax, then, if I have excluded property taxes and sales tax, is more fair and more equitable?

Here, once again, I find myself in somewhat distant association with the New Democratic Party on some aspects of its approach to this whole question of taxation, because I believe that those who can pay should pay. I believe that when you make a lot of money in our society, you also owe a debt back to that society and that you should pay a part of that ever-increasing income,

to a nominal level obviously; but obviously as well, you are in a better position to pay a portion of your income if you are in the upper echelons of either a salary or income structure by way of what you happen to make on an annual basis. Those people, in my view, are the ones who should be paying a little more money, and those people who are in their homes and have property taxes, and in so far as sales taxes are concerned, should be paying less money. I believe that adjustment should be made.

I want to tell members that I do not have a bit of problem whatever with making corporations that are now getting away without paying taxes pay their fair share as well, as long as they are profitable and as long as they are generating a surplus in terms of profit and loss at the end of the year. I would have no problem in joining with the government if it finds areas where it can plug the loopholes that allow that type of thing to happen, because I believe that what is fair is fair in terms of taxes and we should all pay our fair share.

But paying our fair share simply does not mean, in the interpretation used by my colleagues in this party, that we simply pass on, without question, so many of the burdens of the programs that have been developed by the current government to the local levels of government and expect them to pay in some mysterious fashion.

I want to move to the whole question of health care. I was astounded today at the minister's response in regard to the question I raised about the Chedoke-McMaster Hospital and the rather dramatic reduction in orthopaedic procedures by that hospital.

I want to be a little nonpolitical here if I can. I know that is tough sometimes in this House, but I want to appeal to the sense of reason and the sense of fairness of the members of the governing party at the moment.

I have a great deal of respect for the minister. I know she is trying hard and I know there are some burdens on her in terms of the escalating cost of health services that make it virtually impossible for her to meet all the demands that can be placed upon her by all of us in this assembly and all of those who are health providers in the province. She gets it from all ends, I know. She gets those who are in institutional care saying there is not enough money in the hospitals, and those who are out in the community-based health services arguing they are not getting enough money. The minister gets caught in that vise in attempting to keep all the parties reasonably happy.

I want to say to the government that if, as it did, it talks in the throne speech about maintaining and improving the quality of health care in the province, then surely the numbers I shared with the minister in question period today must have at least some small impact in terms of proving to her that there is a deterioration of health care in Ontario, at least in this particular case.

We have already covered the agenda time and time again about the waiting lists doubling for heart surgery. We have already talked about the waiting lists for other forms of procedures in health care in our province. We have talked about the problems of the Victorian Order of Nurses and the Red Cross, and about some of the deinstitutionalization that is going on in terms of moving programs out of these facilities and back into the community. I happen to be in agreement with that as well. I think that transition is going to be the saving grace of the health care system, which is now not only a third of the provincial budget but up in the range of some \$13 billion or \$14 billion annually, a staggering sum, and yet we are still not meeting the needs of people.

I was not being argumentative, but I apologize that I got a little angry during question period. That does not happen to me all that often. I think I am a rather mild-mannered chap most days, but today I guess I got a little agitated.

I got agitated because it bothers me when 40 orthopaedic procedures a month are reduced to 15. That is almost a two-thirds drop in the number of procedures that are being carried out by that hospital. This is not just a small local hospital. This is a hospital that serves the needs of the Hamilton region. It includes places like Welland, St Catharines, Niagara Falls, Brantford, Burlington, Guelph and on and on.

Dr Frank Smith, who heads up the orthopaedic department of that hospital, has indicated that the waiting list, which formerly was already unacceptable because it was at November 1989, is now as a result of funding problems going to be extended to June 1990.

The minister's defence—expected, I suppose, and not surprising—was that I indicated that because of funding reductions, and I probably should not have used that term, there was a reduction in the number of procedures. The minister's response automatically is going to be that they did not get a funding reduction. I was wrong. The minister was right, I concede. There has, however, been a reduction in the number of procedures. There has, however, been a very substantial increase in the waiting list.

If we want to set aside the funding question for a moment, let's get out of the rhetoric of this whole health problem and come to grips with where we are really heading.

After I finished my question today, I went back to speak to some of my colleagues, and my colleague the member for Wellington (Mr J. M. Johnson) said to me, "I have one of my constituents who has just been advised that a procedure she requires is going to necessitate a three-year wait."

Believe me, I say to my friends in the government and on the back benches, I am not dreaming these cases up. These cases are coming to our attention because people are truly worried. People are going to heart clinics in Cleveland; they are going to heart clinics in Detroit.

There was a major article within the last few days in one of the American newspapers, either the Detroit Free Press or the Detroit News, talking about the collapse of our health system, that it is now reaching the point where the costs are escalating so rapidly and the demands are so open-ended that the type of quality health care we have had in our province—by the way, in fairness, they were not just talking about Ontario; they were talking about the entire country—the burden of providing this level of quality health care is becoming so onerous our system is in a state of potential collapse.

It is pretty frightening when you think that we perhaps have the best health system in the world, or at least did have, and that we have these problems that are now starting to develop within the health system: longer waiting lists; fewer procedures; people going elsewhere to get treated.

We have people who are frightened, I might add, and under considerable stress to begin with when they have a problem with their heart and they know they are perhaps susceptible to an attack at virtually any time, and then in addition to that we say, "You might have to wait 8, 9 or 10 months before you can get in for surgery."

That is just not good enough. That is what concerns us in this party. It concerns us greatly that the minister would pick up on what was really an unimportant part of the question and say: "I haven't really cut back on hospital care. I haven't reduced their budget." The issue is not how much money they spend; the issue really is how much service they provide. What can they do for the people of Ontario in terms of providing them with orthopaedic procedures when they have reduced the number from 40 to 15 a month? That is 25 people who go on a waiting list, and

that is why the waiting list is now being extended into 1990.

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Why does the minister not say: "The costs are escalating so rapidly and this is the amount that we can afford to pay. I am sorry, but we cannot do anything more than 15 procedures a month"? I have never heard her come clean with an answer like that yet. What we get is a whole bunch of verbal gymnastics that never get to the root of the problem.

Probably the most heart-wrenching case I have ever dealt with in this Legislative Assembly was a constituent of mine by the name of Mrs Maria Gaccioli, a 66-year-old woman who had a heart attack some two years prior to the incident that I want to tell members about. Some members have heard about it before, but it is just a terrible experience to go through this with the family.

After waiting for some two weeks at Victoria Hospital in London and after being of the impression she was going to get heart surgery, she was in fact discharged by the hospital at three o'clock on one afternoon and was dead that day before midnight. Within a matter of six or seven hours that lady died.

The response, as my colleague the member for Mississauga South got today, is that that is a medical decision; that is not a political decision. Am I being fair when I describe it that way?

Mrs Marland: That is what was said.

Mr Brandt: That was the minister's response when we were talking about an infant's operation that was necessary, in the case the member for Mississauga South brought forward today. I do not care, frankly, whether it is a health problem or a political problem. All I want is to see these people get the treatment they need before they die.

This is not my statement that I am going to make, but one I will repeat which has been brought to my attention by a group that I think the government should at least take heed of in terms of its expertise in this particular field, and that is the Ontario Medical Association.

The Ontario Medical Association has made it very clear that statistically one is more likely to die waiting for a heart operation in Ontario than by actually undergoing the surgery. How can we say we have a world-class health system? How can we say we are delivering quality health services in this province when statistically one is more likely to die waiting than undergoing the operation? That is just not acceptable.

There are over 100 people from the Metropolitan Toronto area who are now voting with their

feet on this question. They do not care what we say any more. They are not interested in this debate going on here in the Legislature. They are not interested in whether enough funding is being provided, or whether the minister is truly concerned about waiting lists, or whether the opposition is exaggerating the case, or whatever we talk about in this great forum. They are not concerned about that any more. They get in their cars and drive to Cleveland and within a matter of days get an operation.

I do not like that. I do not like the idea that you have to leave this jurisdiction in order to get the treatment that you require. But I can say that those of us who live in the southwestern part of this province know that the same thing is happening in Detroit hospitals. People are leaving Ontario to go to those particular hospitals because they have—

Mr Neumann: You know why there is no lineup, don't you? Do you want American-style medicine here? Are you holding out American-style medicine as the answer?

Mr Brandt: The member for Brantford knows full well that I am not holding out the American system as the be-all and end-all. I am talking about the fact that when one's life is in jeopardy, when one has a plugged artery or two or three, and when one has a heart valve problem, if one has a difficulty that may result in a heart attack, one is prepared to pay virtually anything, I say with respect to the member for Brantford, in order to get the kind of health care that one needs.

That is in addition to the normal kind of anxiety. Any member here who has gone into an operating room, any member who has had even a minor operation realizes that there is a great deal of anxiety associated with anyone who is going to put you under at one point and then use a knife on you to open something up at another point in the form of an operation. There is anxiety associated with that.

Can members imagine the anxiety of the parents with this young daughter, young Jessica, who requires a heart operation, waiting for the period of time—she has already waited about a year—before she is going to get in to get an operation? Can they imagine the anxiety of the people who are on those waiting lists?

The members can brush it off and say it is not very important—

Mr Callahan: We waited for 10 years in Brampton, Andy, and nothing happened. We waited for 42 years while you were in power.

Mr Brandt: Since the member wants to make an association with that period, when we were in

power, waiting lists for heart surgery on average were three months under a Conservative government. They are now six months and climbing under the Liberal government, and that is not acceptable, my friend. It is just not acceptable.

The member can make whatever comparisons he wants. Does he realize that fewer heart procedures are being performed now in 1989 in Ontario than were performed with fewer dollars back in 1985 in Ontario? Does he realize that? The number of procedures has gone down and the cost has gone up. That is his government's performance. If he thinks that is something to hold out and be proud of and brag about to the people of Ontario, then he should do that.

Mr Callahan: We are just rectifying the past.

Mr Brandt: The member should state the facts as he sees them—and he will have his opportunity—and I will state the facts as I see them. I simply know that the statistical evidence we have received indicates that the number of heart procedures—I say this to him as charitably as I know how—has in fact gone down. If that is the mark of an improved, better quality health care system, then I do not understand the numbers.

It is just like in the Chedoke McMaster Hospitals in Hamilton, where orthopaedic procedures have gone from 40 to 15, and the government stands up there and tries to convince everybody the health care system is getting better. How can it get better if the waiting list is longer and if the actual number of procedures is going in the wrong direction?

Let me talk a little about the thrust of the ministry, where I think the government can save some money. I said I would try to be positive at least during part of my speech and I am going to do that, because there seems to be some level of confusion in the government as to how it is going to make the transition from institutionalized care to a more community-based health care system.

First, I want to tell the government the way one does not go about it. One does not go about it by turning one's back on the Victorian Order of Nurses or the Red Cross, the providers of community-based health care in this province of ours. The Premier (Mr Peterson) indicated yesterday in question period that he is prepared to sit down with the VON administration and work out some kind of financial program that will meet its particular needs.

I applaud the government for doing that, but I want to say that when you look at the costs of keeping somebody in the hospital at \$300 or \$400 a day and when you take a look at the costs of

providing for that same individual, if he can be cared for in his own home and removed from an institutionalized setting, you will see that there is a tremendous saving to make that kind of change.

Part of the partnership in delivering health care in this province is the association we have had historically with the VON and the Red Cross. I can remember standing up in this House almost on a daily basis, as did the members of the opposition as well, I might add, and saying: "Look, you have to. You have no choice. You have to fund the operating deficit of the Red Cross. It is absolutely essential that you do that," because the in-home programs that were being provided by the Red Cross served some 180,000 senior citizens in this province who would otherwise go without that service.

Well, 180,000 senior citizens is an extremely important component of delivery service in this province, recognizing that we only have—I am adding up quickly—some 42,000 or 43,000 residents perhaps in nursing homes and in homes for the aged. All by itself the Red Cross was looking after four times as many people as we have in institutional care, and it was helping to keep those people in their homes a little longer at a much reduced rate and at a much more modest cost to government.

1640

What the government has to do, if it is going in some way to get the cost of institutional care, hospitals in particular, under some form of control, is to make the shift in terms of a financial contribution to the community-based health providers in advance of making that shift. They cannot make the shift first. I wish they could; they could save a lot of money doing that. But they have to have those programs in place in advance of making the shift.

It is like mental illness programs. There are many patients with mental illness who are being discharged from institutions, who are not getting the aftercare necessary in their communities. There is no form of care that is in place from the time they are in fact discharged from those institutions.

It is frightening to realize that some of these people are simply going to rebound right back into the institution or get themselves into some form of difficulty while they are out in the communities, because they are not yet ready to cope, or they are at least not ready to cope all of the time without some form of support system that awaits them out there.

That is why it is so essential, I say to my friends opposite, that we make sure that when we

move into that transition and we move people out of institutional care into the community, we have those community-based programs in place, and they are in fact responsive and ready to accept, if you will, the increased responsibility that will be necessary at that particular time.

If the figures I am sure the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) has looked at and I have seen are correct, we can go through a tremendous period of adjustment in the health care field—it is not going to be easy—that will allow us to meet some of these increased costs and provide additional service without letting the budget get completely and totally out of control.

There are a lot of other things we have to do in Ontario besides providing health care. That is important; it is probably the number one priority. But when one looks at the ministerial responsibilities that so many others have, they have got to get a piece of that budget as well. The only way they can get a piece of a reasonable budget is if health care is brought under some control.

But if the numbers the minister I am sure is aware of and I have seen are correct, up to 30 per cent of all patients in hospitals do not have to be there. If that figure is correct, three out of every 10 people, three out of every 10 beds, are filled by people who do not have to be there.

The worst part of that is that they are occupying the most expensive facility that government can offer, because the cost of that particular hospital bed, as I indicated earlier, is probably well in excess of \$200. It is probably averaging about \$400 in the province, and I can tell members, in teaching and in university hospitals, it is closer to a staggering \$1,000 a day in some instances. So the fact is that we can reduce some of those costs if we go about this program intelligently.

I want to talk about another health care program that I do not think has been given the kind of recognition it deserves in this House. I recognize that my friends in the New Democratic Party have some objection to providing for-profit services in the province as they relate to health care.

I would just remind them that there are a number of participants in the health care field who provide some form of assistance to our health care providers and who do make a profit: the drug companies, as an example, and interestingly enough, construction firms that build the facilities that we use, our hospitals and so forth, and the members of the labour unions who work for those construction firms and earn their paycheques and therefore a profit.

Mr Reville: No, they get wages.

Mr Brandt: Wages are profit if there is a surplus, the same way as some companies have a deficit or a loss at the end of an operating period. If you guess wrong, you sometimes have a problem.

But the fact of the matter is there are all kinds of people involved in the health care field. Manufacturers of hospital equipment are an example of those who make a profit. All of these people are in the field, and I want to tell members of some providers of health care who do it very effectively and very efficiently and who are having some difficulty in making this government realize the kind of problem they have today. Those are the providers of care in our nursing homes.

A nursing home operator who has to provide the capital to build his facility and then has to pay taxes, has to meet the standards of government, which I agree with, very stringent standards of operation, and has to meet the criteria set forth by this government receives on average about \$60 a day. A home for the aged, on the other hand, which is usually municipally owned and government-operated, with no capital cost because it is all in the form of a grant, with no taxes to pay, still serving the same seniors who come into those homes, receives about 35 to 40 per cent more money, something in excess of \$90 a day. Yet they are both expected to deliver the same level of service.

Something is wrong when the guy who is making the profit is charging fully a third less than the guy who is not making the profit. I thought that when you looked at numbers, you were supposed to be talking about the most efficient way to deliver health services in our province. It is interesting to note that there are 30,000 people, essentially seniors, in this province who are in nursing home beds and about 12,000 seniors in homes for the aged.

Mr Reycraft: Who created this system?

Mr Brandt: Who created the system? I have had this discussion with nursing home operators. The system, funded by two different ministries, was created by the previous government. I do not back away from that at all. The fact of the matter is that they had a reasonably uneasy truce four years ago, because the degree of separation between the amounts of money received by the two types of providers of this particular service were not as far apart as they are today, were not as extreme. That gap is growing, that gap is becoming more and more of a problem, if you will, as a result of the passage of time.

The members opposite have been the government for four years. I guess after four years they should come to grips with some of these problems. I would think that after four years, if we had remained the government, we would have attempted to address them. But that really is not the issue before us; the issue before us is that the government is now being taken to court by the nursing home operators who are saying, "Your method of funding is unfair and you are not providing us with equal funding compared to homes for the aged."

What bothers me in an even more fundamental way about those two types of programs is that we, all of us collectively here in the Legislative Assembly, who are responsible for these types of programs coming into being, have really allowed for the establishment of two classes of senior citizens. We have one class of senior citizens who have crafts rooms and we have another class of senior citizens who do not have those kinds of facilities. We have one class of senior citizens who rely on outreach programs, but essentially in those homes we have two classes of senior citizens, one that receives a whole range of programs because the homes are getting in excess of \$90 a day per patient and another group where the homes are getting around \$60.

I will tell the members how much that adds up to. I have heard criticism from time to time from the members of the New Democratic Party about these people who get a profit out of the system who should not be allowed to provide health care to some of these needy people. There are 30,000 people who are getting a relatively good level of care. Those who are bad operators should be shut down tomorrow, if not today. I do not agree with any of those operators functioning or operating in a slovenly or an unacceptable fashion in terms of the quality of care they provide.

But does the government know what it is asking them to do? It is asking them to provide the same level of care for \$60 a day that somebody else is getting \$90 a day for; and that is not the total equation, because you have still got taxes and capital costs over and above that. What is really bothersome is that there is no effort whatever being made on the part of the government to close that gap, to reduce the amount of difference between those two types of facilities.

1650

The private health care providers, those who are in the nursing home field, would construct more facilities, provide additional spaces, clear out some of the people who at present are stuck in hospitals because they have no place to go, at a

very high cost, if there were someplace to move them to, where they need perhaps a lower level of care and where a nursing home could provide adequate accommodation to meet their needs. But we are now stuck in a system where the nursing home operators are in court with the government to try to sue it to get a fair deal.

I guess this is where I part company with the New Democrats on this particular program. They disagree with private operators providing health care. I say that as long as these people meet government regulations, as long as they meet government standards, as long as they behave in a responsible corporate fashion—and today they even have to disclose their profit-and-loss statements—

Mr Callahan: That is because of legislation we brought in.

Mr Brandt: That is fine. I am not disagreeing with it. Their profit-and-loss statements are a matter of public record.

Again, when I talk about community-based health facilities, I have to include this kind of service. It is an important service being provided by an important sector of our business community which can provide an adequate-quality level of service to people who require it. But are we in fact working co-operatively with them? The answer is no. We are actually going to court against these people.

So when I talk about finding ways to reduce the cost of health care and put in place community-based health facilities that will allow us to make that very difficult transition from one form of care to another, I have to say that we are talking about private nursing home operators as well as homes for the aged, a mix, if you will, of services that will accommodate all of our citizens.

I guess what I want to say by way of summation is that there are a number of things that were not mentioned in this throne speech that I think should have been mentioned. The only two major objectives, targets, that were identified by the government were the objectives of education—and in my brief remarks, I made some comment about the fact that I think this government is being unfair in the way in which it is handling education programs and passing the costs on—and also the whole question of the health care field.

If one were to do an objective analysis of the throne speech, one of the things we would have to say is that it was short and to the point. For a government that has been accused of losing its focus and losing its direction, this throne speech

gives it a very modest target to shoot at. They really have very few objectives or goals that they have to achieve in order to be deemed successful in terms of this throne speech.

I guess what bothers my colleagues in my party, and what bothers me on a very personal basis, is this very long list of items that were simply ignored in this throne speech. They were very flippantly dealt with by the Premier when he said, "We intend to do something about all those things too." I would like to take the Premier at his word, other than a whole bunch of things he had in previous throne speeches which he did not do anything about. How do we believe him now when he leaves a whole bunch of things out of the throne speech and tells us that he is going to do something about them?

Those priorities—and I see the very competent Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr Kwinter) is here—have to include things like working our way through the free trade deal and being part of the opportunities that will present themselves in the context of that deal. That is not an easy one; it is going to be a tough challenge, but I think this government can make a leap in terms of its new responsibilities to make this deal work now for the benefit of all Ontarians.

I think we have to do more in a whole host of areas that we have not done on the environmental front. I never even touched on housing, because of the time that is escaping rather quickly and passing all too quickly, but the question of housing was not dealt with in any way, shape or form in the throne speech.

I say to the few remaining free-enterprisers on the other side of the floor and those who perhaps have looked at the numbers and maybe are getting a little bit concerned about the direction our whole housing development field is heading in, it should come home in a very real sense that when the private sector has virtually abandoned the rental field, something is wrong with the rental policy.

During the early stages of Bills 50 and 51, or Bills 51 and 52, I can remember the discussion, when we entered into some of that friendly banter that goes back and forth between the rows when various initiatives are being introduced, in which we talked about the fact that the private sector was going to abandon this government entirely and it was going to stop building. I remember ministers with all the goodwill in the world saying: "Oh, no. That is not going to happen. The private sector loves us. We are going to deal with the private sector. When they see the new initiatives we have coming in our rent review

program and on our new landlord-tenant legislation, they are just going to fall over with joy and they are just going to come flocking forward in order to participate in the new Ontario of tomorrow."

I can tell members that they all went home, put their feet up and started watching television. They are not building any more. They stopped. They are out of the field. They are not the bad guys any more, because they are not in the development game any more. They have abandoned the housing field, because the government has made it impossible for them to be fair and virtually impossible for them to build affordable rental units in Ontario.

There is no form of government, including the most socialist and/or dictatorial—those are two different forms of government—in the entire world, irrespective of its political philosophy, that can provide all housing that is required by its citizenry through government. There is no government that is ever going to be able to achieve that particular objective. What it really needs, I say to the few free-enterprisers left on the other side of the floor, is the co-operation, the involvement and the confidence—

Mr Ballinger: Who do you think you are—Donald Trump?

Mr Brandt: One thing I do know is that you are not.

One of the things it needs is the involvement of the development community to participate with government to bring on the number of units that are needed. Again I say to members that government cannot do it alone. In the housing field, it will require—and it is necessary and needed—that we get the co-operation of the private sector to help with some of the problems.

Government can help, certainly, to provide some of the infrastructure. One of the ways in which government can be of immense assistance to municipalities and to the development community in bringing housing on, and perhaps even have at least some modest influence over reducing the cost of housing, is to find a way of cutting through the bureaucracy and speed up the approval process. That approval process is now taking, in some instances, seven long years for a proposal to get through the government bureaucracy. That is understandably far too long.

Mr Cureatz: Longer than the Second World War.

Mr Brandt: My colleague reminds me that is longer than the Second World War and he is right.

The fact of the matter is that there are ways in which the government can be part of the solution rather than part of the problem. When one takes a look at the things, in addition to those that I have mentioned, that have been left out of this throne speech, I think members will come to the realization, as I have, that this government has established for itself a very narrow target so that it would not be criticized for being unfocused and for not having met its objectives. In other words, if one does not establish any standards, one will not have any trouble achieving them.

1700

This government has established an extremely low, unacceptable standard in terms of what it has set forth in the throne speech and there is some hope that it might be able to achieve some success in meeting that extremely low standard.

But I and the members of my party are here with another responsibility. Our responsibility is to monitor their progress, whether they like it or not, on a daily basis. In a participatory democracy such as we have, and in this particular forum, it is our responsibility to ask questions of them on a whole broad range of issues, which we will continue to do on a daily basis. We will do so in a responsible fashion. We will do so with our questions, I would hope, well rehearsed and well prepared and well researched. We will do so in a fashion that, hopefully, will prepare this province to move on to another level of quality of service delivery in terms of all ministries of the government.

By way of closing, let me simply say that I am disappointed in the performance of this government as indicated through its throne speech and I have an amendment I wish to read for the record.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Brandt moves that the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session be further amended by striking out everything after the phrase, "and leaving untouched and unmentioned an extraordinary range of issues facing the people of Ontario," and substituting the following:

"In particular:

"The continued mismanagement of the provincial taxpayer's dollars and lack of planning for fiscally responsible public policies;

"The failure on the part of the government to come to grips with the serious shortage of affordable housing in the large urban centres of the province;

"The confusion and lack of leadership demonstrated by the government with respect to automobile insurance;

"The lack of financial commitment and planning to continue the move towards increasing community-based health care begun by the previous government and the failure to mention home care in particular;

"The ageing of our society and the need for public policy initiatives to assist the seniors of the province;

"The continuing practice of the government to offload its responsibilities to other levels of government, in particular its attitude to worker training, retraining and workforce management and its continued delegating of provincial responsibilities to the municipalities;

"The total absence of any acknowledgement of the vital role of resource policies for the provincial economy, including agriculture, mining, forestry, tourism and energy;

"The failure on the part of the government to present a program which recognizes and would address the problems of regional disparities of the north and the east;

"The government's wilful blindness to the growing shortages of nurses, teachers and other professionals and skilled tradespersons, which, if they persist, will threaten the viability of our economy, the competitiveness of our industries and the quality of our public services;

"Therefore, this House declares its lack of confidence in this government."

Mr Mahoney: I would, first of all, like to congratulate the leader of the third party for at least a long speech and also for having the tenacity to get through the speech with some of the heckling that was going on. Just to assure him that it is not partisan, I can promise him that if he sticks around, he will find some of the same individuals will be heckling me. So the member should not let it bother him. It is certainly not a partisan issue; it is something that you either just get used to or ignore. However, I have enjoyed the last two speeches in particular.

Mr Jackson: You backbenchers give up so easily.

Mr Mahoney: One of the things is that when they heckle, at least you know they are paying attention to the leader of the third party. That is better than everyone sitting here falling asleep, which has been known to happen on occasion.

I particularly enjoyed the speeches by the leader of the third party and yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition. I regret that he is not here. Since he is not, I will not be too critical of his comments, except to say that I could not help but notice that the S word seems to have resurfaced in the vocabulary of the New Demo-

cratic Party. The S word, members will recall, was a word that was discarded during the political campaign of 1987.

Mr Ferraro: Was that "sex"?

Mr Mahoney: I do not even know if that word has been discarded in their vocabulary.

Clearly, the Leader of the Opposition was not comfortable with his federal counterpart's reference to socialism. Yet I heard in this House yesterday the Leader of the Opposition using the word "socialism" with regularity. It makes me wonder if they, indeed, have realized that perhaps this government actually occupies the position of the middle, the position of caring, the position of delivering social programs and they are retreating back to the left, recognizing that is the only ground that perhaps is left open to them to lay claim to.

1710

Ms Bryden: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: It seems to me the member is giving the speech he should have given yesterday when the Leader of the Opposition was speaking and he should address himself today to the remarks of the leader of the third party.

Mr Brandt: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Since the member was indicating that the member speaking should be addressing his remarks in the context of my recent, very brief speech, I just want to point out that there is certainly no requirement for the member to do so. He is to speak on the throne speech and he is to make his comments.

The member can pick on and/or correct for the record anything that I or the Leader of the Opposition has said, but there is no requirement that I am aware of in my brief experience in this House for the member to be only reflecting on my remarks, as much as he may be so inclined to do as time goes on. That is a decision for the member to make.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Mississauga West may continue on the subject under discussion in accordance with standing order 19.

Mr Mahoney: I appreciate the point of order. Frankly, I do not intend to unfairly criticize the speakers of days gone by, who are not here to defend themselves, but I cannot go by the discussion of the throne speech and the many items without commenting on the fact that I note a very definite trend by the Leader of the Opposition and his party to move back to that left position that is traditionally occupied by the New Democratic Party in relationship to many of their comments regarding the throne speech.

In fact, I detected a motto. There was a lot of discussion about sharing the wealth. There was discussion about speculation taxes and spreading the wealth around Ontario. There was someone steeped in a little more history than that particular gentleman who actually started that concept. It was a man by the name of Karl Marx. In fact, sharing the wealth is clearly a Marxist motto. I suggest the motto I heard coming from the Leader of the Opposition is and should be, "What's mine is mine, and what's yours belongs to everyone."

I think the real agenda in talking to the throne speech for that party is the sharing of private wealth and indeed the spending of the public purse, all in the name of doing good. I think members will find that the do-gooders would destroy the confidence in this economy, both domestically and internationally, and take away any of the incentive that has been really the hallmark of building this great country and this great province.

This government, on the other hand, is clearly dedicated to the opposite. As parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, I was delighted to read the first point in the throne speech: "Ontario must continue to provide the leadership to build on our economic strengths to ensure tomorrow's growth." That clearly is the opposite of the viewpoint that was put across by the Leader of the Opposition and the viewpoint that is espoused by anyone who associates himself with the socialistic trends that party advocates.

The Tories, on the other hand, the Conservative Party—and the honourable leader of the third party has departed—purports to represent the business community.

Mr Ballinger: He is not very happy with you.

Mr Mahoney: Well, we know he is not too happy with the member for Durham-York, but in any event, they do purport to represent the business community.

In the 42 years that the Conservatives occupied the seat of power in this House, we can remember many of the frustrations as members. In fact, we even have the former mayor of Uxbridge and other municipal politicians in our midst, and we can remember all too well—

Mr Jackson: Is he a former Tory too?

Mr Mahoney: We can remember all too well, I say to the member for Burlington South, that the members of the Conservative government of those days were in fact the ones who invented the concept of passing on more responsibility to the municipalities with less authority and very little

funding. I can recall a particular minister of the day—

Mr Jackson: What about Sunday shopping?

Mr Mahoney: I am delighted to talk about Sunday shopping, because, as I have said before in this House, never has a fraud been perpetrated by so few on so many as with the opinions that have been espoused by members of the third party on the issue of Sunday shopping. It is an absolute travesty. Here it is, we will be coming up to Sunday shortly in this week, and I wonder how many of us have an opportunity to go shopping on Sunday in establishments that were not open prior to the passing of Bill 113.

The issue of enforcement is particularly interesting, because prior to Bill 113, the law in this province said that no stores shall open on Sunday unless they have an exemption. It laid down ways in which they could obtain an exemption. Those ways were either through square footage or through particular necessities such as pharmacies—things will calm down now that certain members are leaving the House. I am sure we can get on with the business of the throne speech.

Interjections.

Mr Mahoney: Mr Speaker, I wish you would call order.

Prior to that, no stores were allowed to open on Sunday without an exemption. Today no stores are allowed to open in this province on Sunday unless they have an exemption, and the members opposite know it full well. They have simply managed to say something often enough so that the media and certain members of the public started to believe them.

But the people now realize that what we were saying all along was correct: that indeed it is not a Sunday shopping bill that was passed by this Legislature, but rather controls that have been placed appropriately and properly and clearly, with guidelines and enforcement mechanisms, in the hands of the local municipalities so that they can make a decision.

The member for Mississauga South, who was part of the same council that I was part of, would know that on numerous occasions we voted to allow for certain exemptions within our community.

Mrs Marland: Not this one. I didn't.

Mr Mahoney: Well, the council did and it was and still is a democracy.

We voted to allow the Malton fruit market to open on Sunday because it was a tourist attraction. The Malton fruit market is in the

community of Mississauga North, represented by my colleague the member for Mississauga North (Mr Offer), and he will know that that fruit market is open on Sunday.

I would suggest, with respect, that some people might dispute whether or not that particular establishment is indeed a tourist attraction. I would not be one of them, knowing that it attracts tourists from all over Ontario and upper New York state on Sundays. I would agree that it is quite a tourist attraction. However, others would dispute it.

Under the old law, of course, there was no opportunity. Now they do not have to play games. If they wish that particular facility to be open, it can be open. If it is open illegally, the police have clear-cut guidelines with which to enforce the law, Bill 113, and it is clearly up to them to do so.

I would like to talk a little bit about the involvement at the local level and what this government is doing to communicate. There has been much discussion that we do not discuss things with the local municipalities. I was speaking to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario last Thursday, prior to the arrival of the member for Sarnia (Mr Brandt). I talked to them about lot levies, a subject, frankly, that has been near and dear to my heart in relationship to AMO for many years. Indeed, because of that, they invited me to come down and talk to them about the whole lot levy issue.

The interesting thing is that, once again, it is a matter of getting the proper message out. For years, the development industry has been saying, "We do not need lot levy legislation." It is not hard to understand why they might say that. It is not hard to understand that when you realize that last year in 1988 the total revenue in the region of Peel, the city of Mississauga and Mississauga Hydro in lot levies alone was \$56 million. The year before that it was \$44 million.

It is not hard to understand why the development industry might like to find a way not to pay those tens of millions of dollars to the municipality. Yet what do they pay the levies for? They pay them for arenas, swimming pools, parks, soccer pitches, baseball diamonds, paths in parks, lighting on fields, roads, sewers, basic infrastructure.

1720

Mr Villeneuve: Let's sock it to them.

Mr Mahoney: Well, the member does not sock it to them. That is what is so nonsensical and almost ostrich-like thinking, sticking his head in the sand and not understanding what it takes to

build a community. I can tell the member what it takes to build a community, because I have represented the community of Erin Mills in Mississauga as well as many other parts of that great city for many years. We add in the neighbourhood of 5,000 houses per year in our community. We are not talking about issuing building permits for 20, 30, 50 or even 100 houses; we are talking about building new towns.

When the people move in, buy their homes and set up shop with their kids, what is the first thing they want to do? They want to go for a walk. They walk down the street and they say: "Where's the park, Martha? There isn't a park here." The member does not think we should charge levies to build the park in the community that is generating the need for the park. It is absolutely mind-boggling that anyone would think that way.

I can remember in 1969 when the 5,000 acres in Erin Mills South owned by the Cadillac Fairview Corp were released for development. There was a wonderful sales trailer that was established right in the community and in that sales trailer there was a model. It had an arena and a swimming pool. It was absolutely wonderful with little plastic models. You would walk in and look up on a wall and they would tell you that it did not rain or snow in the community, that there were deer in the backyard, that there were birds overhead and in no time at all the children you did not have yet would be running around the community enjoying all these wonderful facilities.

It took 12 long, frustrating years to get in place those facilities that were promised in the early 1970s before they even broke ground, and the only way it was done was by funding through the lot levy program. So I have no difficulty in defending the concept of lot levies to the Urban Development Institute of Ontario, the Toronto Home Builders' Association or the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, because it clearly and fundamentally says that development must pay its own way. I would hope that this government would adopt that principle that development must pay its own way.

When you expand it and take in the issue of schools, you say to yourself, "All right, we've got levies to cover the costs of the arenas, the pools and the parks and all of the amenities that these people are using." Members should never kid themselves that the developers do not use that stuff to sell their homes. There is nothing wrong with that, but all of a sudden we do not have schools in the community and we are finding that

our children have to get on a bus and travel for half an hour, an hour or longer, particularly if they live far out, to get to a school. They do not have the ability to go to a school within their own community. So we only have certain options.

The leader of the third party said that he understands, and in fact it was one of the points I strongly agreed with him on, that the real issue is one of affordability, regardless of what we are talking about. Whether we are talking about health care or whether we are talking about education does not matter: the issue is one of affordability, of how to generate the dollars.

The green paper that has been put out shows a way of generating substantial dollars for education purposes that I personally think—and I speak at this stage just for myself, because it is still a green paper and has not been adopted by this government—is a responsible way to go. It is high time that the "paying your own way" philosophy applied, at least in a small part, to the cost of building schools, because it is the kids who are moving into that community who indeed generate the pupil places that require the schools to be built.

There has been much mention that in the throne speech we did not mention a number of items. It is always interesting. It is only my second throne speech. Some members have been around for many more. Yet I have heard that the first throne speech was too all-encompassing; it was too broad. There was so much stuff in there that the opposition stood up and said that we did not say anything and that there was no direction.

The opposition should take heart that in fact—it is obvious to me—we listened a little bit and said: "Maybe we shouldn't just be throwing all of the issues against the wall. Maybe what we should be doing is getting specific." So we get specific, to the member for Burlington South. We listen to the select committee on education and adopt many of its policies. We listen to our critics and we get very specific in six areas.

I found it, as I said earlier, particularly encouraging that the first area deals with providing leadership, to build on our economic strengths and ensure tomorrow's growth, because if we do not do that, then of all the efforts that we are talking about—whether they are lot levies, building new schools, new health care facilities or a new way of delivering health—none of them really matters, because the economic engine that drives this province is actually the small business community. It is very important that we create an atmosphere of economic

strength and confidence so that that business community can succeed.

I know that in the days of the Tory regime there were questions about how to start a small business, and some of the members will remember the old joke that one simply starts a large one and waits. That is not true any more. In fact, these are some statistics that the members might be interested in. There are over 400,000 small businesses in the province of Ontario today, small business being defined as any business with fewer than 100 employees. I would suggest to the members that that is a very large business, but that comes within the definition of small business under the ministry guidelines. There are over 400,000 of them.

Last year alone there were 127,600 new companies formed. Over 90 per cent of those companies had fewer than 20 employees. It clearly is the most dynamic source of job creation in the province today.

Mr Villeneuve: And you are against free trade.

Mr Mahoney: I am going to get to free trade. I am delighted to talk to that and talk to a member of a party whose cousins in Ottawa have simply stuck their heads in the sand and said: "To hell with the people who are losing their jobs, to hell with providing new training, new ideas and new skills development. We will leave that to the province. It can do that."

They have gone and simply signed a deal in this country so that we now have to get aggressive and find ways of helping our companies compete. I can tell the members that at the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology we are doing exactly that.

Not only that, I can tell the member opposite that we are looking way beyond the United States. We recognize that in 1992 there will be a new market created in this world, consisting of 12 countries, in the European Community. We believe we must actively encourage our corporations here in Ontario to go after that market of 350 million people in a free trading market.

Mr Fleet: How many people?

Mr Mahoney: There are 350 million. We think it is important—

An hon member: It is 322 million.

Mr Mahoney: They probably just had a population boom since the member in the third party started his speech.

I would point out that we are actively going after that marketplace. Not only that, we are participating in the Pacific Rim. In fact, let me

share with the members some of the literature we have: Doing Business in the Pacific Rim—very important for our business community; Doing Business in India—once again, we all know that we have a substantial community of people from India in this great province and it is important that we work with them to establish guidelines and relationships for exporting to India, to take our Ontario products over to their country.

How To Do Business in the US, I would point out, is a provincial publication. It is not a federal publication, because the federal government does not really seem to care. The Conservatives do not seem to care. They just say: "Get out there. You do not need any help from anybody. You go ahead and compete out there." We say differently. We say there are many things that we can do and we are prepared to put them out and publish them.

How To Do Business in China, one of the greatest markets in the history of mankind, opening up to free enterprise, with the new attitudes in the world, and we, through our ministry, are going to help the Ontario corporate community do business in countries like that.

We have programs where we talk about developing the potential. Again, we work with the business community to help them develop their potential. In the Pacific Rim—we have publications, folks; I am telling the members—we have it in French; we have it in English. We even get into the—

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Mr Reycraft: The parliamentary assistant gets to go to all these places.

Mr Mahoney: The PA should get to go to more of these places; I agree, and I am working on that.

The aerospace industry is a very important sector, and we deal sector by sector; we are not strictly dealing in the countries. We deal with how to export, a step-by-step system for working out your correct exporting price.

I mean, we are talking nuts and bolts here. We are not talking the airy-fairy stuff these guys talk about all the time; we are talking nuts and bolts: how to run a business, how to export. We take the Ontario business community by the hand and show them what to do to improve the exportability and tradability of their companies. Let me tell members that I have talked to many of them and they really appreciate it.

We have a number—we have a program called NEBS, new exporters to border states, I would point out, for the information—

Mr Villeneuve: You are doing a number on us.

Mr Mahoney: I find it interesting. The leader of the third party made the comment that we fail to translate words into action. I will tell members they should come and just take a day and walk through the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology if they want to see action. I am going to tell them that we have more programs working with the business community, giving them the leadership, confidence and dynamic attitude they need to compete in this global economy.

We have a program called NEBS. I had the privilege of meeting with a group of people who were then put on a bus and whisked off to the border for a couple of days to learn how to get into that United States market, because the attitude that the third party and its colleagues in Ottawa have created is that now we have free trade, we can just walk across the border. I mean, they have not told—

Miss Martel: “There will be no deal.” Do you remember that, Steve?

Mr Mahoney: They have not told the facts, I say to the member for Sudbury East (Miss Martel). They just have not put the information out there and she knows that. She knows the business people in Sudbury need her help. I want to promise her that I am prepared to offer my help to her constituents to help them do better in the business world. In fact, they can go through the NEBS program, where they will go down to the border and learn what is required to export into the United States.

Mr Cleary: Steve, you are on a roll. Keep going.

Mr Mahoney: I am so, and I am going to keep going too, what the heck. Let me show members some other stuff we have been working on in the ministry that I think is just fantastic. We are not like the feds where we just leave them out there floundering around. We give them leadership.

We have a book here, The Ontario Software Industry. It is a profile and a directory and it is tremendously helpful to people in the software industry. We have a list of manufacturers in the tool and die industry.

Mr Polsinelli: Do you get it all for \$24.99?

Mr Mahoney: All for \$24.99; that is right. In fact, we accept Visa, MasterCard and American Express; no problem.

Mr Polsinelli: Do you throw in the rack?

Mr Mahoney: You cannot get the rack.

Here is an example that proves how committed this government is to the business community. It

is a directory of the apparel manufacturing industry. As a matter of fact, the member for Etobicoke west (Mrs LeBourdais) is the advocate for that industry and for the fashion industry. She works very hard with them, for an industry by the way, to the honourable member sitting over by the other honourable member—I am not sure which one of them is which—that I would suggest is in serious jeopardy as a result of their party’s free trade agreement. Now we have to save them and we will save them; I promise that.

Miss Martel: You were going to save us with the election. Do you remember that, Steve?

Mr Mahoney: I remember the election well. In fact, there was a lot of fun in Mississauga. I do not know how the member did in Sudbury, but we had a good time in Mississauga.

We have a list of Ontario subsidiaries of foreign manufacturing companies so that we can work with those people on an ongoing basis.

I got a little sidetracked there, but I want to say that the small business community is really the main economic engine in this province.

Mr Polsinelli: You sound like Rick Ferraro.

Mr Mahoney: Rick taught me almost everything I know, except how to grow hair. I learned that on my own.

As I have told the members, there are over 400,000 small businesses; there were 127,600 new ones last year. Twenty-nine per cent of those were incorporated by women and 40 per cent of them were incorporated by people under the age of 30. That really tells us something. That tells us the psyche has changed from the day when most of us were attempting to graduate through school. That tells us that the job in those days or the attitude of people coming out in the 1950s and 1960s, and maybe even the 1930s and 1940s when some of the members went to school, was that you wanted to graduate and get a job as a vice-president, perhaps, in a major company, rise to become a comptroller, something of that nature. But that has changed today.

I have spent a fair amount of time over the last several months travelling around Ontario talking to young people in the high schools and the colleges, to young entrepreneurs in the chambers of commerce and the boards of trade, to people in their businesses, and they have a different attitude today.

Mr Villeneuve: Ask them about Bill 208.

Mr Mahoney: I would be delighted to talk about Bill 208, but the Minister of Labour (Mr Sorbara) would kill me.

There is a new psyche out there. The young people are saying, "I want to go into my own business." Is that not exactly what we were talking about in the throne speech, fostering an entrepreneurial spirit in Ontario that frankly, with all of their bravado about being the party of business, the Tories in their regime did not have the first idea of. They do not have the first idea what it means to provide leadership, what it means to provide an atmosphere where companies can grow and prosper.

We have been in an unprecedented growth period in the past four years in this province, and I happen to think we can take some of the credit for that—certainly not all of it; in fact, one of the things that has always bothered me is that all too often politicians of all stripes try to take credit for all these wonderful economic things.

We can take credit for many of them, but the main thing we can take credit for and should take credit for, and it is addressed in the speech, is the leadership and the management of the economy while the private sector makes things happen. That is what we believe in in this party. That is what we stand for in this party, to create an atmosphere where the private sector can develop and grow.

One of the things you must do whenever you are talking about the private sector growing is work with the community. The Community Economic Development Guide—once again, published by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology; I think we have our own printing press over there—is really a vital document that shows what it is like and really is exactly what it says, "A planned approach to developing your community."

Mr Villeneuve: Speed it up.

Mr Mahoney: I am not going to speed it up. I have 20 minutes to go, if the member does not mind.

Mr Villeneuve: I am anxious to get Hansard. I have all kinds of people to mail it to. I have a few turndowns from MITT who would just love your speech.

Mr Mahoney: You want to get Hansard. You want to get at this. Maybe you would learn something. I will get you a copy and I will be happy to autograph the copy and send it over to the member.

This document shows that our government is indeed committed to working with the communities. You do not develop communities with an industrial and a commercial and a residential base overnight. You do not do it by accident. It is important that the municipal council be very

much involved, that the board of trade be very much involved, that any industrial associations be actively involved. It is a co-operative effort. It is an effort of new partnerships.

In my view, new partnerships are what this government brought to bear when it took office in 1985 and enhanced in 1987. We got rid of the pork-barrelers. We got rid of all the old hacks. We brought in a whole new atmosphere that showed that we were aggressive in dealing with the business community.

Mrs O'Neill: What is a pork-barrel?

Mr Mahoney: I will introduce you to a couple. They are still here.

In 1986, the Premier of this province believed so strongly in the small business community, and also believed in my view that there was not enough being done for the small business community, that he created the office of the small business advocate. The first advocate was the member for Guelph (Mr Ferraro), and I have the privilege of following in his footsteps.

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This makes a statement by this government to the small business community that indeed we want to represent a focus for the views of small business within government. That is our role whether it is on Bill 208 or Bill 162—the member for Sudbury East shudders—or on any other matter, regulation or piece of legislation that is of concern to the business community. It is our role at the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology, and particularly in the small business advocacy section, to represent effectively the views and concerns of that community.

I believe the political appointment by the Premier serves as a link between the small business community and MITT, but also goes beyond the scope of the ministry to promote small business to the public. It has truly been one of the pleasures of the last six months to go around the various ridings in the province and have an opportunity to do that. We have a mandate to co-ordinate an approach to small business issues, to review existing programs within small business, some of which I would like to talk to members about.

The leader of the third party, the member for Sarnia, said—I will find his quote somewhere here—that we have failed to translate words into actions. One of the first things the committee of parliamentary assistants did in 1986, under the leadership of the member for Guelph—

Mr Polsinelli: I was on that committee.

Mr Mahoney: Was the member on that committee? Well done. That was a good job.

One of the first things was to establish the new ventures program. Let me tell members that the new ventures program has been a resounding success. For those watching at home—

Mrs O'Neill: Oho!

Mr Mahoney: Well, my wife will be watching. I will bring the milk home.

That is the program where the entrepreneur puts up \$15,000 and goes into a bank and borrows a matching \$15,000 and that money is guaranteed by this government. As of 30 April 1989, under that new ventures program there have been 10,796 loans issued for a total monetary value of \$144 million. Now, double that \$144 million to \$288 million, because it is matched by the \$15,000 of the entrepreneur. Do not tell me we do not put words into action.

Mr Offer: How many jobs is that?

Mr Mahoney: Of course, it creates jobs: 30,000 jobs created just by that one program.

Mr Offer: New jobs.

Mr Mahoney: New jobs that were not there before. Would the member for Mississauga North like to come up here and give me a hand?

Clearly, that is translating words into action. How anybody can sit there with a straight face and say this government does not have an agenda or has not translated words into action is absolutely beyond me. Yet they continue to do it. They continue to do it and we have the proof in the programs.

I should tell members another thing. There is a requirement that whenever a cabinet submission goes forward, a small business impact statement should accompany that cabinet submission. That says to the small business community, those 400,000 entrepreneurs out there, that we care about the impact of the legislation or the regulation or the submission to cabinet. We require the bureaucrats to do an analysis to find out what the impact will be, to see if there are some ways we can soften the impact if it is negative or to enhance it if it is positive.

I think those kinds of statements in the small business sector really and truly do clearly lay out an agenda that goes hand in hand with the first statement, and I have only got to the first statement, in the throne speech.

As a member of the select committee on education, I intend to take some time to talk about the education system—I know my colleague from Mississauga North would be destroyed if I did not talk about the education

system—and many of the other issues that are involved.

Just on the issue of economic development and growth, the messages we have sent out through MITT and the small business section of that ministry show confidence and the leadership to the business community. We have a toll-free hotline number for all businesses right across this province.

I should say to the minister that we have a problem with that number; that is, you cannot get through because it is always busy. That indicates to me that there is real confidence and real strength in the use of that number. I think we are going to have to expand that service, because the business community is very eagerly interested in knowing the programs that we provide for it through the small business section.

We have publications. We have seminars that we put on regularly, how to start a new business, how to set up a marketing plan. If anyone out there is thinking of starting a new business and he does not talk to someone within our ministry, I can only tell members that he is really missing the boat, because there is tremendous leadership, as outlined in the throne speech.

Some members would be aware that not too long ago, if I can find it here, there was something that came in their mail. It was known as the small business six-pack. There were six basic items that came to the members' offices in this package to enable the members of this Legislature to better communicate with their constituents the kind of leadership and the quality direction that this government is showing in the areas of providing financial assistance for small business.

Let me just give some of them. I have told members about the new ventures program and how successful that is. "The youth venture capital loans: Loan guarantees of up to \$7,500 for young people between the ages of 18 and 24 and recent graduates between the ages of 25 and 29." The applicants must contribute an amount equal to 20 per cent of the loan, but it is clearly put there as an incentive to help them. That is the youth venture capital loans program.

The student venture capital loans program: Last year alone there were over 1,100 young people in this province who borrowed up to \$3,000 to start a summer business under this particular program. That is really fostering an entrepreneurial spirit and showing the young people how they can run a small business and assisting them a little bit financially along the way.

Mr Wildman: Oh, no.

Mr Mahoney: I know that members of the official opposition are against free enterprise and an entrepreneurial spirit, and I understand that they would rather the young people in this province not be given the kind of assistance and leadership that we give them, but this government is clearly committed to helping our young people get on with their lives, helping them understand what it means to start a small business and helping them to succeed in life rather than telling them: "Don't worry, folks, we're going to take money away from the other guys who have it and we're going to give it to you. It's going to be a sharing program"—the old S words, sharing and socialism. That is not liberalism in this province.

Mr Wildman: You don't believe in sharing.

Mr Mahoney: I believe in sharing, but I do not believe in giving it away. You have to teach people they have to work for things in this society. You do not just give them a handout. You give them a hand up instead of a handout. That is what this party believes in.

[Applause]

Mr Mahoney: It is great to have the seals here.

"The Ontario Development Corp," the ODC, "the Eastern Ontario Development Corp and the Northern Ontario Development Corp provide term loans and guarantees to secondary manufacturing and service industries closely allied with manufacturing and tourist operations and attractions." There are 14 field offices located across the province to help anyone who is interested in availing himself of the services of one of our three development corporations.

Innovation Ontario Corp, another service under the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology, "provides debt and equity capital for technology-based products, processes and services." For further information, all they have to do is call our ministry. We are delighted to arrange to sit down with the individual to see how we can tailor a program to best help him compete in this global economy.

We have Nordev. "The Ministry of Northern Development and Mines program provides assistance to businesses wishing to start, expand or modernize in North America."

The SBDC, "the small business development corporation program provides government incentives for the private sector to invest in Ontario's small business."

It is very important that we understand the difference here. We are not talking about

government handouts. We are not talking about wheelbarrows full of money that certain parties might try to perpetrate as being the reality.

What we are talking about is creating arrangements with the private sector through two specific programs, the small business development corporation and the Computerized Ontario Investment Network, COIN, the nationwide database program.

Both of these programs are funded in part by our ministry and encouraged to get together with private sector entrepreneurs and investors so that they get together to do exactly what the throne speech says, and that is to provide the leadership to build on our economic strengths to ensure tomorrow's growth.

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The provincial wage subsidy in skills development, the Futures program: Business residents in Ontario are prepared to train new employees qualified for wage and benefit subsidies under the Futures program.

Under skills development we have the northern Ontario summer program, we have the Ontario Skills program, and federally, of course, there is the small businesses loans program where you can borrow up to \$100,000 or 90 per cent of the money required to open a new business.

These are the financial programs that I talk about in the six-pack, financial assistance for small business.

On top of that, though, just to enhance and to recognize that not everyone necessarily needs financial help—and in fact it would be improper to overly burden a new company that was starting out with too much debt—that is indeed why the programs are designed the way they are designed.

New ventures, for example, provides a debt top-up of \$15,000—not a lot of money, but when you combine it with the \$15,000 from the entrepreneur, it tops up the capital of the corporation for an additional \$30,000, which just might be enough to put that corporation over the top, to get it beyond that critical three-year growth period to sustain its growth.

Not everyone requires financial assistance, so we have further programs which are of an advisory nature within our ministry, once again showing that the statement in the throne speech of promoting our future is accurate.

We have the small business hotline that I talked about, the one where you cannot get through because it is so busy because it is in such great demand in this province.

Mr Wildman: You just leave it off the hook.

Mr Mahoney: Only when my friend calls do we leave it off the hook.

We have seminars and publications under the ministry, such as *Starting a Small Business* in Ontario, an excellent book. It should be a bible for anyone starting a small business. I wish I had a sample of it here, but I guess the pages could not carry everything over. It is an excellent book and should be a bible for anyone starting a new business.

We have *The State of Small Business*, a publication that is just what it sounds like, the current state of small business, and is published by the committee I am privileged to chair: How to prepare a business plan for manufacturing, service, retail, marketing for those particular sectors and record-keeping made easy.

We have self-help centres established around the province for an individual who is in doubt about what he can do, what he can access, what material might be available, what kind of advice he might be able to get or what kind of financial programs might be available. All they have to do is walk into a self-help centre and our staff will be delighted to sit down and help them.

Mr Callahan: The opposition needs some record-keeping, Steve.

Mr Mahoney: I am sure they do.

We have community small business centres in Brantford, Cornwall, Kanata, London, the northwest region, Waterloo and York. These are incubators that really prove this government's commitment. They are small business incubators set up to provide reasonable office space, to provide assistance with secretarial work, perhaps some computer assistance, a fax machine or something of that nature, to provide a small business that is facing a particularly large overhead with an opportunity to keep that overhead down.

We have university small business consulting services at Brock, Carleton, Lakehead, Laurentian, McMaster, Ryerson, Queen's, the University of Toronto, Trent, the University of Ottawa, the University of Western Ontario, Wilfrid Laurier, the University of Windsor and York University; once again showing that we are taking our message into the academic world, that we are not simply waiting for them to come to us but we are going into the colleges, the universities and the high schools and saying: "We believe in entrepreneurs and we believe in you. We believe in the indomitable spirit of the Ontario people and the Canadian people who want to go

into their own business and who need"—as I said before—"a hand up and not a handout."

We have field offices around the province, of course, where our staff are prepared to sit down with individuals wanting to start a small business. That too, I should point out, even to members of the opposition, is available in the six-pack, and I hope they would note that I did not, in any kind of a partisan way, withhold the information simply to my colleagues in the Liberal Party but was delighted and in fact insisted to my staff that we circulate it to all members.

Members will also be delighted to know that I left out the film with the core speech of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. I did not think members opposite would be interested in that in their ridings, but if they would like that as part of their cable show, I would be delighted to provide those services through my office as well.

Mr Wildman: You're all heart.

Mr Mahoney: I thank my friend. I am glad he is appreciative of it.

I have only a few minutes left today, but we are here tomorrow, I believe. I am not quite finished; I have a number of issues; I have not even got by the first issue.

Mr Callahan: Perhaps we should call in more members of the third party.

Mr Mahoney: No, I do not mind that. I do not play those games. Even though the members of the third party might play those games with us, I am not one who would ever call a quorum call, because I believe we are all dedicated, hard-working members of this Legislature. Even though some of our philosophies are substantially out of whack, they are certainly dedicated and committed. As a matter of fact, some of them probably should be committed. Maybe we could arrange that, but I am not at the health care portion of my speech, so I will not talk about whether or not they should be committed.

I would like to conclude the first section.

An hon member: You're running out of steam.

Mr Mahoney: I am not running of steam. Is the member kidding? I hardly got started. I want to conclude the first section, though, on economic development with some discussion about the Premier's Council. The Premier's Council of course published the document *Competing in the New Global Economy*, which I am sure most members have seen.

Mr Wildman: We have memorized it.

Mr Mahoney: You have memorized it. It is good bedtime reading. I have talked about it a little bit and the attitudes that this government is showing in promoting the Premier's Council report. The Premier established this council because he recognized that our industrial and social infrastructures are coming under unprecedented pressure. Since the inception of the Premier's Council, it has developed seven centres of excellence to improve our research and development capabilities in the key areas of technological opportunity, such as space, new materials, telecommunications and information technology.

It has designated six centres of entrepreneurship in Ontario colleges and universities to help instil in the students, as I have said before, an awareness of the opportunities and the challenges involved in running your own business. It has developed a program to provide matching grants to industrial research projects involving promising new processes and technologies and it has developed a program to encourage universities and the private sector to collaborate in research projects.

In fact, I had the privilege of representing the minister at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute where there was a large group of people from the academic world and the business world with some government representatives there to talk about those exact things. It was really very exciting to see the level of co-operation and enthusiasm that was going on in that. I really attribute that to the leadership shown by the Premier's Council.

It has also participated in a major review of the competitiveness of the Ontario economy, which was a massive project involving a great deal of research, discussion and analysis. More than 1,000 people were consulted in this process and policies of our leading competitors were investigated. The result of these deliberations was the report that I have referred to, *Competing in the New Global Economy*, published approximately one year ago.

This report identified a number of major challenges facing the Ontario economy and made a series of recommendations to deal with those

challenges. It recommended assistance to help our mature industries modernize where necessary, it outlined policies to help new industries grow and prosper in this province and it recommended ways to foster a more entrepreneurial culture in the province and suggested ways to improve our science and technology infrastructure.

The government has implemented a new direction for industrial restructuring as a result of the Premier's Council report by establishing the office of the industrial restructuring commissioner, who will assess the competitive factors facing selected industries in order to avoid, wherever possible, plant closures and job losses as a result of the free trade agreement that our third party's cousins in Ottawa have foisted upon this country.

The government has also acted to improve assistance for research and development by introducing the research and development superallowance in the last budget. It announced the establishment of the technology personnel program to subsidize the costs of small firms of hiring technical personnel.

I realize I am getting a time-out signal, but I have almost a minute left. I intend to carry on tomorrow, but I intend to finish the minute too, if the whip does not mind. We are here until six o'clock.

Actually, maybe what I will do is leave in the middle of the Premier's Council report because I know the members opposite, particularly, would like to hear more tomorrow and they would like me to pick up on the theme of the very positive attitude and atmosphere that has been created through the establishment of the Premier's Council, a council that has shown great leadership throughout the world and given a sign of confidence in international markets. I think that confidence will be very clear and evident to members opposite at the end of my speech, which will come some time tomorrow or the next day.

On motion by Mr Mahoney, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 1801.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

- Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)
 Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)
 Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)
 Beer, Charles (York North L)
 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)
 Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)
Bradley, Hon James J., Minister of the Environment (St Catharines L)
 Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breaugh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)
 Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)
 Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)
Caplan, Hon Elinor, Minister of Health (Orillia L)
 Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)
 Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
 Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)
 Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)
 Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)
Conway, Hon Sean G., Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)
 Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)
 Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)
 Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)
Curling, Hon Alvin, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)
 Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)
 Dietsch, Michael M. (St Catharines-Brock L)
Eakins, Hon John F., Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)
Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A., Speaker (Perth L)
 Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)
Elston, Hon Murray J., Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L)
 Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)
 Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)
 Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)
 Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)
 Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)
 Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)
 Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)
Fontaine, Hon René, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)
Fulton, Hon Ed, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)
Grandmaitre, Hon Bernard C., Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)
 Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)
 Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)
 Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)
 Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)
 Hart, Christine E. (York East L)
 Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)
Hošek, Hon Chaviva, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)
 Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Kanter, Ron (St Andrew-St Patrick L)
Kerrio, Hon Vincent G., Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)
 Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)
 Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)
Kwinter, Hon Monte, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L)
 Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)
 LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)
 Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)
 Lipsett, Ron (Grey L)
 Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L)
 MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L)
 Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)
 Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)
Mancini, Hon Remo, Minister without Portfolio (Essex South L)
 Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)
 Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)
 Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L)
 McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)
 McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)
 McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)
 McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)
 McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)
McLeod, Hon Lyn, Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)
 Mclash, Frank (Kenora L)

Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste Marie NDP)
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)
Nixon, Hon Robert F., Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics (Brant-Haldimand L)
Oddie Munro, Hon Lily, Minister of Culture and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)
O'Neil, Hon Hugh P., Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Quinte L)
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)
Patten, Hon Richard, Minister of Government Services (Ottawa Centre L)
 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)
Peterson, Hon David R., Premier and President of the Council and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (London Centre L)
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)
Phillips, Hon Gerry, Minister of Citizenship (Scarborough-Agincourt L)
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott and Russell L)
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)
Ramsay, Hon David, Minister of Correctional Services (Timiskaming L)
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-Walkerville L)
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)
 Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Riddell, Hon Jack, Minister of Agriculture and Food (Huron L)
 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)
Scott, Hon Ian G., Attorney General (St George-St David L)
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)
Smith, Hon E. Joan, Solicitor General (London South L)
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)
Sorbara, Hon Gregory S., Minister of Labour (York Centre L)
 South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)
 Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)
 Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)
Sweeney, Hon John, Minister of Community and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)
 Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)
 Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)
 Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)
Ward, Hon Christopher C., Minister of Education (Wentworth North L)
 Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)
Wilson, Hon Mavis, Minister without Portfolio (Dufferin-Peel L)
 Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)
Wong, Hon Robert C., Minister of Energy (Fort York L)
Wrye, Hon William, Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament
Wednesday, 3 May 1989

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, 3 May 1989

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HOME CARE

Mr Laughren: The Victorian Order of Nurses is in financial crisis because the Peterson government really does not support community-based services. As a direct result of chronic underfunding by the Ministry of Health, VON is now \$2.5 million in deficit. The government's unwillingness to accept full responsibility for that deficit and to negotiate an appropriate rate for 1988-89 and 1989-90 will result in VON carrying a total debt in excess of \$3 million.

All of the rhetoric by this government about wanting to shift the community health care system away from institutions and more towards community-based care is just that: rhetoric and nothing more. Unless the government urgently addresses VON's estimated \$2.5-million deficit for 1988-89 alone, home nursing services in some parts of the province will have to be cut back or eliminated.

The Victorian Order of Nurses is a national, not-for-profit organization dedicated to the provision of quality and cost-effective health and related services. VON is Ontario's largest provider of comprehensive community health care services available to over 90 per cent of Ontario's population. Underfunding of VON services may very well result in reduced services in the home. This is a particularly important issue in northern Ontario where hospitals are fewer and farther apart and where distances in general tend to be much greater.

WATER RESOURCES

Mr Pollock: I wrote the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley) on 28 March 1989 requesting a meeting with representatives of the village of Havelock to discuss the status of the municipality's application for grant funding to assist in the development of additional water facilities. The answer I received back was that the village was attempting to find new sources of water.

This is incorrect. They have found new sources of water. The estimated costs have already been sent in to the ministry. The village council is concerned that its pumping capacity right now is overloaded and if it is a hot, dry summer, it could run into a situation of burning out its pumps. There is no way that the village of Havelock can entertain new development.

The Minister of the Environment should live up to his commitment of open government: either the minister or members of his senior staff should meet with the Havelock council to resolve this situation.

CARASSAUGA FESTIVAL

Mr Mahoney: I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues in the House that it is once again time for the fourth annual Carassauga Festival. Mississauga's multicultural celebration will be held on May 12, 13 and 14 and offers citizens the opportunity to meet the world in their own backyard.

This city-wide festival will have 13 different pavilions participating this year. They are: Assyria, Arabia, Croatia, Cyprus, England, Greece, India, Lithuania, the Philippines, Portugal, Scotland, Trinidad and Jamaica. Visitors to these pavilions will be able to experience the foods, dances, customs and various costumes of each represented country.

This annual event has been a great success in Mississauga, and most of the success is due to the wonderful volunteers on the executive of Carassauga and the many volunteers who give of their time on Carassauga weekend to staff the pavilions. I am delighted to announce that today in the House we have representation from those volunteers of Carassauga in the visitor's gallery. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for the many long hours of preparation and hard work that go into the making of this event.

As a preview to Carassauga weekend, there will be a Meet the World Week from May 8 to 11 at South Common Mall to allow residents to sample the foods and see some of the entertainment that will be featured on the weekend.

I would like to invite members of the Legislature to "Come Meet the World" on the weekend of May 12, 13 and 14 and join

Mississauga in its celebration of the cultural heritage of our great city.

KOMAGATA MARU

Mr Philip: This weekend my wife, Suzanne, and I will have the honour to commemorate with many other Canadians a historical event which took place 75 years ago. The commemoration of the landing of the Komagata Maru, which will be hosted by the Ontario Council of Sikhs, reminds us of one of the more blatant instances of discrimination in our history.

The federal government of the day had passed an order in council which required immigrants to come to Canada by continuous passage. This was done to restrict the entry of people from India. None the less, a Japanese passenger ship, the Komagata Maru, managed a direct voyage and arrived in Vancouver carrying 366 British subjects of Indian origin. These people had every legal right to enter Canada.

Unfortunately, the British Columbia press reported the arrival of the ship as a "mounting oriental invasion" and the BC government was determined not to allow the passengers to land. Passengers were denied the replenishment of food and water. The ship was refused permission to dock and was surrounded by armed guards. It was ordered to return home after two months and escorted into the Pacific by the Canadian navy.

We as Canadians are often critical of racism in other countries. In commemorating the horrible events surrounding the Komagata Maru, we are reminded that we as Canadians are not free from committing offences of prejudice and racism. We must be continuously vigilant to fight prejudice and racism in our country and in ourselves.

1340

AGRICULTURAL LAND

Mr J. M. Johnson: I would like to bring to the attention of this assembly an editorial from the *Erin Advocate* of Wednesday, 19 April 1989. The headline of the editorial reads, "OMAF Sells Out":

"The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food's mandate is to keep all agricultural land for agricultural products—that is, to protect agricultural land, especially that rated as class one.

"OMAF is supposed to oppose proposals by developers to construct buildings on prime agricultural land. It is supposed to fight to keep agricultural land in the hands of farmers.

"So why has OMAF changed its mind about the Snelgrove settlement area on Highway 10 just

north of Mayfield Road in Caledon? An OMAF spokesperson confirmed that the land classification had not changed—it is still number one agricultural land.

"However, the spokesperson said the main reason OMAF is now supporting the development of the land... is that the economic climate of the area has changed since it first opposed the proposal.

"OMAF is selling out to developers—selling out under economic pressure.

"Whether the economic climate of an area changes or not it doesn't matter. Class one agricultural land should be protected or there won't be any land left worth growing food on. And OMAF"—and the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr Riddell)—"is supposed to help save farm land from exploitation, not help it along."

That is the end of the editorial, but when the present Minister of Agriculture and Food was in opposition, he was opposed to this development. Why has he changed his mind?

POLISH CONSTITUTION DAY

Mr Fleet: What happened on this day 198 years ago and why is it relevant to us today? On 3 May 1791 the first constitution was declared in modern Europe which established a democratic society. Now in that same country, for the first time in decades, basic freedoms and rights that Canadians take for granted are beginning to re-emerge. I speak of events in Poland.

Polish Constitution Day is a symbol of national redemption and the indomitable strength of a people. After valiant struggles, the trade union Solidarity has been legalized. Freely contested elections for some but not all seats in the Sejm, the Polish Parliament, are scheduled next month.

This fragile reflowering of freedom is still incomplete, but let us warmly encourage its growth. Beyond our humanitarian concerns, which are themselves fundamental, the advent of democracy within Poland suggests a greater prospect for reduced east-west tension and a secure international peace.

I ask all members of this assembly to join me in saluting the democratic traditions of Polish Constitution Day.

CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mr McLean: My statement concerns two Ontario-based teams of athletes who swept out of Ontario and into the hearts of curling fans across Canada by proving beyond a doubt that they clearly are masters of the ice.

The Penetanguishene rink of skip Russ Howard and his teammates, vice-skip Glen Howard, second Tim Belcourt, lead Kent Carstairs and spare Larry Merkley, won its third Ontario men's curling championship in four years last February and then went on to place second in the Canadian Labatt's Brier the following month.

Meanwhile, the Thunder Bay rink of skip Heather Houston and her teammates, vice-skip Lorraine Lang, second Diane Adams and lead Tracy Kennedy, captured the women's world championship in Milwaukee earlier last month with a spine-tingling eight-to-five win over Norway.

The Russ Howard and Heather Houston rinks serve as excellent examples of the fine efforts put forward by amateur athletes from throughout Ontario. They show what can be accomplished when individuals band together in competition.

On behalf of all of us, I congratulate the Russ Howard and Heather Houston rinks and thank them for serving as unofficial ambassadors of Ontario wherever they compete.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

Hon Mrs Caplan: Today I am pleased to announce funding for two additional community health centres in Ontario.

As indicated in last week's throne speech, our government is committed to providing accessible, affordable, appropriate health services for all. Expansion of the number of community health centres and health service organizations is an example of this commitment.

There are currently 15 community health centres in operation. About \$15.2 million was allocated to CHCs in 1988-89, and it is estimated that roughly \$23.7 million will be made available in 1989-90. Community health centres are uniquely designed to respond to specific areas or segments of the population in particular need. This can range from geriatric programs for seniors to drug education, counselling and other programs directed at our youth.

Today, we have approved the establishment of the Black Creek Community Health Centre in the northwestern section of Metropolitan Toronto and the funding of the Teen Health Centre in Windsor, both of which will offer alcohol and drug addiction programs.

More than \$1 million is being provided for the Windsor centre to serve teens and young adults. The centre has operated since 1980 and has offered services for adolescents since 1985. It has enjoyed growing support in the community

from school officials, doctors, health and social service providers.

About one third of the new ministry funding being announced today will enable the centre to greatly expand its services and to relocate to a larger facility within a year. It is estimated that in three years the centre will be serving about 5,000 young people.

The centre will focus on those in the 12 to 24 age group who are in need of care or at risk of developing medical or emotional problems, such as substance abuse, eating disorders or depression. Programs will include medical treatment, addiction and health promotion counselling and community education.

These services will be made available in English, French, Italian and Chinese wherever possible. The ministry supports initiatives such as the Windsor Teen Centre which provide improved access and appropriate programs for the province's multicultural groups.

This same kind of cultural sensitivity is inherent in the plans for the Black Creek Community Health Centre, which will serve a diverse neighbourhood where some 42 per cent of the population uses neither French nor English as their primary language. The ministry will provide almost \$800,000 in funding for Black Creek, \$186,000 of which will go towards startup costs.

The centre will be located in the Jane-Finch area at a site yet to be determined. It is expected to be in operation by October of this year and exemplifies the government's goal to provide community-based services in neighbourhoods where they are most needed.

In addition to providing medical services with flexible hours and location, the centre will offer outreach programs such as alcohol and drug abuse counselling, parent support groups and youth workshops, as well as services to the elderly. In three years, it is projected that the centre will be serving 3,000 people, with an estimated annual budget of \$861,000.

Both of these new community health centres reflect this government's goal to provide quality health care as close to home as possible and to promote an addiction-free lifestyle among our youth.

I believe that both centres will make a significant and positive impact in these communities.

NONPROFIT HOUSING

LOGEMENTS À BUT NON LUCRATIF

Hon Ms Hošek: It gives me great pleasure to rise today to tell all members of this House about

a new partnership which has just been forged between four United Church of Canada presbyteries in Metropolitan Toronto and the Ministry of Housing. A few moments ago I had the honour of signing an agreement with the moderator of the United Church of Canada and officials from the four Metro presbyteries of the church which will result in the building of approximately 600 nonprofit housing units.

At this time I would like to pay tribute to the United Church moderator, Dr Sang Chul Lee, and the four presbytery chairpersons of Metro Toronto who worked so hard to make this agreement happen. They are Rev Joyce Kellmy of Toronto Scarborough; John P. Hamilton of Toronto South; Mrs Laura Eubank of Toronto Don Valley, and Rev Robert Trimble of Toronto West—and also Rev Bob McElhinney, who is the chairperson of the interpresbytery affordable housing committee. All of them join us here today to receive the appreciation of all members.

1350

Il me fait plaisir en particulier de faire cette annonce aujourd'hui, car cela aide à illustrer l'appui formidable de la communauté que le gouvernement reçoit, dans les efforts faits pour s'assurer que les habitants de cette province obtiennent les logements dont ils ont besoin et qu'ils méritent.

Les députés se souviennent peut-être que nous avons signé un accord semblable en décembre dernier avec l'archidiocèse catholique de Toronto. Nous avons aussi signé des accords avec plusieurs municipalités.

J'ai confiance que nous travaillerons en collaboration avec d'autres groupes religieux et organismes communautaires dans l'avenir, afin d'atteindre notre objectif commun, qui est de fournir des logements sécuritaires à prix raisonnable à tous ceux qui en ont besoin.

The agreement we signed today will result in hundreds of new housing units being built, but the activity this agreement will generate goes far beyond merely putting bricks and mortar together. It will raise awareness of our housing needs and it will illustrate that when the community works in partnership with government, we can make a difference.

An affordable housing committee has already been formed by the four presbyteries to co-ordinate all efforts to create and support housing initiatives. Under the agreement, this committee will immediately begin to prepare an inventory of land owned or leased by the four presbyteries and assess the suitability of that land for the development of nonprofit housing. Also, the

committee will work with congregations to determine their interest in becoming sponsors of nonprofit housing and will encourage congregations to become involved in housing initiatives in various other ways.

The Ministry of Housing will help by providing funding to help build nonprofit housing through our existing programs. We will also assist in housing project development and provide support in creating educational and promotional materials to help the committee do its very important work.

In all of these activities, the interpresbytery affordable housing committee will be raising awareness of housing needs and doing something concrete to meet those needs. This agreement with the United Church represents an excellent example of religious leaders taking initiative on a matter of great importance to us all. I commend the leadership shown by the United Church and thank them sincerely for joining us here today.

RESPONSES

COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Reville: In response to the announcements today by the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan), may I extend the congratulations of the New Democratic Party to the citizens in the Jane-Finch area and in Windsor who, along with health care professionals, worked very hard to bring these two projects to the stage where the Ministry of Health is prepared to help them and in one case increase the funding. I would also like to congratulate the Ministry of Health because it is clearly beginning to head in the right direction in terms of community health.

I think we should note, however, that this is not a program that flows out of the throne speech. This is a previous promise to double the number of people served by community health centres and health service organizations over a period of years. I think it would be more encouraging for members of our party if we were to hear some new announcements that this government was prepared to accelerate the progress towards serving more people by community health centres.

Because a number of the programs offered by the two centres will attempt to address the severe problems faced by youth who abuse alcohol and drugs, it is with some sadness that I say we have not made nearly enough progress in this regard either. While these programs will indeed be welcome, there still remains a very severe shortage of residential treatment beds for youth suffering from problems associated with alcohol

and drug abuse. We hope that very soon we will hear some further announcements from the Ministry of Health in that regard.

Mr D. S. Cooke: I want to take just 10 seconds to tell the Minister of Health that we appreciate the community health centre announcement in Windsor. I think this announcement actually flowed from the promise Larry Grossman made when he was Minister of Health. It has been in the planning stage for six or seven years, so I would like to say to the minister that we will believe her commitment to community health if she proceeds with the major proposal by the Windsor and District Labour Council for a health service organization that will be all-encompassing. If she comes forward with that one quickly, then we will know she supports community health.

NONPROFIT HOUSING

Mr Breauth: I want to congratulate those members of the United Church community who have entered into this agreement today. I know, as all of us who are interested in the field of affordable housing would know, that 600 units will not resolve the problem that faces us, but it is encouraging to see different church and community groups come forward with their portion of what can be done to resolve a very vexing problem. I congratulate those who take such initiatives.

I urge now that everyone in Ontario who is in a position to assist to do so, whether it is by means of making use of lands they have to a better degree or simply encouraging others in their own community to take the same kind of steps as they have taken, and to do so on a scale that would be unprecedented in the life and history of this province.

The great challenge for governments, of course, will be to support those community groups, those church groups, which like the United Church today have said: "We've got something that could help. We have some land. We have some ability. We have some initiative. With some assistance on the part of government, we can play our role in resolving an affordable housing crisis."

Each member here will know that in his or her own community there are groups that could do exactly the same thing. If all of us work together, perhaps we can resolve this, not quickly and not tomorrow, but we can make sure that in this rich society in which we live, the obscenity of poverty and people not having a decent place to live can be obliterated.

I congratulate those who have taken that initiative today but I lay down for them and the minister the greater challenge. The problem remains and a press conference will not resolve it. It will take a great deal of work, a great deal of initiative and a great deal of imagination on the part of all of us to resolve it. I hope we do that.

Mr Harris: I too want to congratulate those officials of the United Church who are in the chamber today for coming forward and playing their role in helping all of us address a very serious situation, a situation that most of us, in a province as wealthy as Ontario, find most distressing and indeed intolerable. I offer my congratulations on behalf of my party.

I indicate to the House some very gentle criticism to the minister, the Ministry of Housing and the officials with whom these ladies and gentlemen will have to deal over the next period, hopefully of not so many years, both provincially and federally.

I offer, by example, my congratulations to Emmanuel United Church. After a period of three or four years of struggle, most of it dealing with the bureaucracy and with government, it got its initiative, its assisted housing projects, off the ground. One of them, which we are very proud of in North Bay, opened some two years ago. The number of units escapes me but it is in the order of 50 or 60, so for North Bay it is actually very significant when you look at equivalent populations.

Had the congregation, had those who spearheaded the project on behalf of that church on Lakeshore Drive in North Bay, had those dedicated people not been so dedicated, had they been easily discouraged, they would have walked away from the project many times over. It took interminable meetings with the bureaucracies, both federally and provincially, and with the politicians to finally get through all of the approvals process necessary.

1400

I congratulate as well in my riding—I point out another example—St John's Anglican Church. Just a few months ago, we had the official opening. It went through similar experiences. They met in my office on probably half a dozen occasions, throwing their hands up in the air and saying: "We're trying to provide this housing. As our member, why is it that the very governments that announce the programs, that take the credit"—that is fair politics—"and have the glossy brochures are the impediments to this project?"

I issue that challenge to the minister to try to improve upon that. I offer my congratulations

and hope that the dedication of those involved will carry through these projects from announcement stage to official opening. If the track record is any experience, I will probably be in government by the time we get them open and I will be delighted to be there at the opening.

I finally point out to the minister that on page 4 she indicates her ministry will "provide support in creating educational and promotional materials to help the committee do its very important work." I ask the minister, in a very serious way, to help the group do its work by facilitating the myriad of civil servants and ministries it will have to work through between now and opening day of these projects.

ORAL QUESTIONS

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Mr B. Rae: I have some questions again today for the Premier on the subject of his meeting with Envacc Resources. I notice that on the public record is a statement from the minutes of the meeting the Premier held with Envacc in June 1988 that it is his view the company should proceed with contacting the municipalities, and according to the Globe and Mail the Premier commented favourably on the makeup of the company and was "impressed that Marco"—meaning Marco Muzzo—"was involved." The statement that is on the record from the minutes of Envacc Resources has never been denied by the Premier.

When the Premier made that comment, or is quoted as making that comment, I wonder if he was aware of the fact that Mr Muzzo was a very prominent witness and indeed was named on a number of occasions in the now well-known Waisberg Royal Commission on Certain Sectors of the Building Industry, which I am sure the Premier will recall was a very important event in the 1970s.

The Speaker: The question?

Mr B. Rae: Was the Premier aware when he made that comment about Mr Muzzo's involvement in Envacc Resources that Mr Muzzo is quoted on page 113 of this royal commission as saying:

"Counsel: 'So you were not opposed to the general practice of bribery; you were only concerned about whether it worked or not?'"

"Mr Muzzo: 'That is right.'"

Is the Premier aware of that statement by Mr Muzzo?

Hon Mr Peterson: I have encountered the gentleman on a couple of occasions in my life and I am not aware of any of that.

Mr B. Rae: Was the Premier aware that Judge Waisberg, in his account of the events in the building industry taking place throughout the 1970s, found that there was a pattern of price-fixing in the drywall industry in particular, that there were several meetings held between a number of drywall contractors of which Mr Muzzo was part, and that on pages 232 to 239 of the Waisberg royal commission it is made very clear that Mr Muzzo was attending meetings at which there were discussions of price-fixing and that there were discussions directly about combinations which would have the effect of fixing prices in the industry? Was the Premier aware of Mr Muzzo's involvement in that regard?

Hon Mr Peterson: No, I know nothing of his background.

Mr B. Rae: These are all a matter of public record. They are a matter of the findings of a royal commission in this province that took place over a decade ago. They are a matter of profound public policy.

I wonder if the Premier, in light of this, would not now question his own encouragement to this company and can he confirm, and is it in fact the case, that the Premier indicated that this group, of which Mr Muzzo was at that time a very major financial backer, should proceed with contacting the municipalities? Why would the Premier have given that advice, given the kind of record Mr Muzzo had over a decade ago?

Hon Mr Peterson: I give any group that is interested the same advice. I have met with other groups. I say: "The regions will make the decision. If you've got some ideas, go and discuss it with them." There are no secrets in this matter and whatever is done will all be tendered and there for everyone to see. I say the same thing to everyone.

CORPORATIONS TAX

Mr B. Rae: I have a question for the Treasurer. In the last number of years, the Treasurer has either followed in lockstep the efforts by the Minister of Finance to give tax breaks to corporations or has in fact gone even further. Given that we now know there are well over 80,000 companies in Canada—of which we can assume about 40 per cent are in Ontario—that do not pay any tax and that Mr Wilson has once again failed to introduce a minimum corporate tax, can we have the assurance from the Treasurer that at least this year he will finally introduce a minimum corporate tax for Ontario?

Hon R. F. Nixon: It being within a couple of weeks of budget time, I think this is an

inappropriate time for me to make any specific responses to the honourable member. I think, however, he is aware that we have a capital tax in this jurisdiction which is designed to allow or require corporations to make contributions to the provincial Treasury based on their paid-up capital and irrespective of their reported profits.

Mr B. Rae: The capital tax in this province, which is the financial capital of Canada, is the second lowest in this country, as the Treasurer no doubt will be aware. I wonder if he can tell us what arguments he would have now against the introduction of a minimum corporate tax. Ronald Reagan introduced such a tax in the United States. There are thousands of corporations making money in Ontario that are not paying any corporations tax. Can the Treasurer tell us what are the arguments now against a minimum corporate tax in Ontario?

Hon R. F. Nixon: We feel the corporations are paying a reasonable share of the revenue into the province. One of the reasons we make that judgement is that the proof is in the pudding. We have the largest corporations in the nation and the most rapidly growing. This is an atmosphere, which the member may object to, that actually creates an opportunity for investment from all over the world, as well as from other areas in Canada. It provides the jobs all of us are extremely interested in and provides a substantial amount of revenue to the provincial Treasury.

Mr B. Rae: If the Treasurer thinks the share is so fair, can he tell us why it is that 20 years and 25 years ago corporations were paying as a proportion of revenues raised, federally and provincially, more in relation to the income tax than they are paying today? There has been a redistribution of wealth in this province, as there has been federally, away from ordinary taxpayers to corporations that already are doing very well.

Why will the Treasurer not put a minimum tax on those corporations that are making money and are profitable? There are tens of thousands of those corporations in this province that are not paying a nickel.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr B. Rae: Does he not think it is time they paid their share?

The Speaker: Order.

Hon R. F. Nixon: One of the main reasons that, for example, the personal income tax is so productive in this jurisdiction is that we have the lowest unemployment rate in Canada, now substantially below five per cent, and in many

communities of Ontario there really is no unemployment at all.

The second thing is that our salary and wage rates, while they are never high enough, whether it is those of members of the Legislature or anybody else who is working for a living, are at relatively high levels. This too is extremely productive. For that reason, all of us, as the members of the working body of Ontario, contribute an extremely large proportion of the revenues for the province. We are quite proud of the fact that the buoyancy in the economy here has magnified and focused that in the last four years.

HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Brandt: My question is for the Minister of Health. I want to return to the question we raised yesterday in the Legislature in connection with some of the changes the minister is making in the health system. The minister in fact made an announcement two years ago to the effect that in the Ottawa-Carleton area there would be seven capital projects that would proceed at a cost of some \$140 million, that would add a number of additional beds to that community and would provide additional psychiatric services as well as some clinic services that were required for the Ottawa-Carleton area.

1410

Because of the institutional problems we have in our health care system, such as Ottawa-Carleton being near 100 per cent capacity in terms of bed use, will the minister confirm that those seven projects worth \$140 million are going to proceed?

Hon Mrs Caplan: As the leader of the third party would know, on numerous occasions in this House and extensively during the estimates discussion we discussed the fact that the capital planning process is under review in light of the changing demographics in the province, the changing technologies which are allowing services to be provided in alternative ways and because of our commitment to expand community-based facilities.

Mr Brandt: Only one of the seven projects is even at the tendering stage and even that project has had the number of beds proposed reduced rather substantially. I would be quite surprised to hear from the minister that the demographics and the technology have changed so rapidly within the last two years that she is now moving aside these particular major projects that were announced, and are anticipated and expected by that community.

Really, all I am asking is, does the minister plan on proceeding and, if not, what does she plan on replacing the need in that community with in order to offset the current health crunch it has in terms of bed use in the Ottawa-Carleton area?

Hon Mrs Caplan: The leader of the third party raises a very important point. He knows many health planners are suggesting that technology has had the kind of impact which would allow some 30 to 50 per cent of all procedures presently done on an inpatient basis to be done on an outpatient basis. As he would know, recently we have been reviewing our projects to give priority to ambulatory centres such as the one in Hamilton and he knows as well that there is one in Ottawa which has been approved to go to tender.

Mr Brandt: I am still having trouble getting my question answered; that is, of \$140 million and a series of 200 or 300 beds that have been proposed, many of which are in the acute care area, seven projects, is the minister prepared to commit to this House that she is going to proceed with those projects as she indicated two years ago; or, alternatively, is she saying that some community-based facilities are going to be used as an option to replace that very good plan she announced two years ago?

Either she is going ahead with the plan of two years ago or she has another plan now as a result of alternatives, technological changes, new innovative measures. I would like to hear what those are. It is going to be one or the other. The Ottawa-Carleton area wants to know.

Hon Mrs Caplan: I have been to Ottawa on a number of occasions and met with the district health council, leadership of the health care community. They know how important it is that we assess the needs today to make sure that before we put a shovel in the ground we are planning for the future. I want to assure the honourable member that this is exactly what we are doing.

RACE RELATIONS

Mr Jackson: I have a question of the Premier. This morning at around eight o'clock, a large number of members of this Legislative Assembly from all sides of this House met at the Royal York Hotel for the 20th anniversary Ontario Prayer Breakfast. We met in a nonpartisan way. We met for fellowship and prayer for this province and its political leaders. At that time the Premier made a welcoming statement on behalf of this province and he stated a rather unusual comment. I would

like to quote directly from his statement. He indicated that "discrimination against minority groups is all too common in our schools."

Could the Premier please substantiate these serious allegations and, if not, would he please withdraw the charges?

Hon Mr Peterson: My friend raises a serious question in a most inappropriate way, in my opinion. I think my honourable friend opposite says it best when he calls it cheap. I agree with that, but I am used to that.

My honourable friend will be aware that we have seen examples of discrimination in this community and across this province. I and others have talked about the mood in this country right now that tends to be less tolerant of minorities. I am sure my honourable friend has seen that. Some of my colleagues and other premiers talk about the atmosphere in their own provinces.

Those of us who care about nation-building and believe—and I am sure my honourable friend opposite does care about the traditions of tolerance and understanding, charity and indeed love that we have in this country, which are the founding principles—that it is important to constantly restate those on a nonpartisan basis. This not a partisan issue, as my honourable friend says, it is an issue that transcends partisanship. But I think it would be naïve to sit here and pretend that everything is in perfect working order.

We are all striving towards ideals and one is racial tolerance in all of our institutions—in our governments, in our schools, in our businesses and every governing institution that we have. To pretend it does not exist I think is naïve. At the same time I think we can collectively articulate a sense of purpose with hope and can build a better community. [Applause]

Mr Jackson: All members of this House would agree that this is a sensitive issue and it should be handled with the utmost delicacy in terms of any comments and public statements that are made.

I would ask the Premier specifically if he is able to make such sweeping generalizations about the fact that discrimination may be on the rise. His exact words were, "on the increase in this province, and specifically in our schools." If he is able to make that statement, would he please substantiate and give evidence as to where specifically this is happening; and if it is, to his knowledge, what are we doing about it?

Hon Mr Peterson: I think my honourable friend makes a mistake of judgement in trying to turn this into a partisan issue or trying to

embarrass me or someone else. Believe me, he cannot embarrass me on this. This is beyond individual embarrassment. This is something that all society has to be involved in.

I think my honourable friend the Minister of Labour (Mr Sorbara) and others talked yesterday about the increases for the Ontario Human Rights Commission, something we all believe in. The Minister of Education (Mr Ward) has talked about programs in our schools. We have talked about programs in the civil service and many others that try to build the ideal of fairness that we all value so very much.

I am not going to answer your next supplementary. Let us leave this on a high note, not on a low note. I want to invite my friend to assist all the other members of this Legislature in trying to achieve that goal together. Let us not cheapen it.

Mr Jackson: Thank you. The fact of the matter remains that we have had some appropriate and necessary improvements on this sensitive issue of race relations. This month the Toronto Board of Education is celebrating 10 years of its commitment to outstanding race relation policies. What we are finding unusual is a comment that, in fact, we have a discriminatory attitude growing in our schools. That is what the Premier has indicated.

My point to the Premier is, quite frankly, that unsubstantiated comments about discrimination in this province only breed the very kind of intolerance that we are trying to overcome.

Will the Premier please indicate to this House whether or not there has been—and he can substantiate it—an increase in the incidence of discrimination in our school system? Is it the trustees' problem or the teachers' problem? What is—

The Speaker: Order. Mr Premier? No response.

NONPROFIT HOUSING

Mr Breaugh: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. I know the minister is aware of a project in London, Ontario, called Country Lane Gardens. I know her staff is aware there is a proposal by Kippislane Co-operative to solve a pretty vexing problem.

The minister may know that this particular project is one of those hidden condominiums. The tenants have been given notice to vacate the premises by 1 June. They formed their own co-operative and read all of the ministry's directives. For example, they see that they qualify clearly under the Homes Now program for funding. They can bring the project in at

\$300,000, under the maximum approved limit. They can provide affordable housing now, but they need an answer by 10 May.

1420

They have an owner of the development who is prepared to co-operate and to sell. They have a co-operative in place and operative now. They need financing from the ministry. They are told they would get money if they would build a new project, but they cannot get funding for the existing project. Can the minister explain to them why she refuses to help them make that a viable, affordable housing proposition now?

Hon Ms Hošek: The member opposite will know that in our nonprofit housing program, what we have done is indicate that we are prepared both to build new nonprofit housing and also to allow groups to buy existing housing. But in order to do that, we have to believe that the capital costs are reasonable and, in fact, make sense. Our analysis of that particular project is that the cost of acquisition plus the cost of repair to bring the building up to adequate standards is very high. It is for that reason that we are looking seriously at it, but are also concerned about the costs involved.

There are many opportunities we are involved with right now in building nonprofit housing all over the province and in acquiring buildings, but in order to do that we have to be convinced that it makes economic as well as social sense to balance those two, in some cases, conflicting issues. That is what we are discussing right now.

Mr Breaugh: Perhaps the ministry can build a new unit in a city like London for less than \$69,500, but I doubt it. Perhaps the minister can put together a proposal that is \$300,000 less than her own approved limit, but I doubt it.

Could the minister not use a little bit of common sense and give them an answer by their deadline, which is 10 May, that their proposal—which is sensible, rational, in place, ready to go and would resolve an affordable housing crisis now—can proceed; or would she really rather see those tenants evicted by 1 June? What is the minister's choice?

Hon Ms Hošek: I like to take the advice of the member opposite and so I will take his advice. We will be using our common sense and our rationality to make the best decision we know how. Let me say that we already have about 17,600 units out there allocated for being built. We have greatly increased the number of units. There are many homes out there that this province has been involved in building, as the

member opposite knows because he goes to the openings of the buildings in his own riding and he knows there are people living in them right now.

We are building more and there have been many allocated in London. We will use our common sense to make the best decision possible in this case, with all the information available to us about the costs and the benefits in this case.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Runciman: My question is for the Minister of Financial Institutions and it has to do with auto insurance. It is really a repeat of a question I asked last week which he declined to answer. It has to do with how his ministry is prepared to deal with the possibility of a significant increase in referrals from insurance companies in the Metropolitan Toronto area to the Facility Association. He has had a week to reflect upon it or to develop one of his infamous instant policies. I wonder if he could respond to it today.

Hon Mr Elston: We do not develop instant policies in the fashion that a would-be leadership hopeful for the Progressive Conservative Party would. I can tell the honourable member for Leeds-Grenville that I am not prepared to develop instant policies. That is why we have on reference now issues concerning the new product reform opportunities that are in front of us with respect to insurance for all Ontario consumers.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that if he has particular cases, I am prepared to receive them and review them. If that is his supplementary, I am prepared to accept his supplementary and look into it as best I can if he can give me the details.

Mr Runciman: My instant policies do not cost the taxpayers of this province \$7 million or the insurance companies \$250 million.

Obviously, again, the minister does not have a plan. He is continually flying by the seat of his pants with respect to auto insurance in this province. I want to give him some statistics which he apparently is unaware of. In the first three months of 1988, versus the first three months of 1989—this is prior to his flip-flop of a couple of weeks ago—the facility has seen a 95 per cent increase in applications. Just to name a few, CIGNA, Advocate General, Upper Canada, Economical, Eaton's, Co-operators and Lloyd's of London are now no longer writing automobile insurance policies for Metropolitan Toronto.

The minister could be faced with a very serious problem. Obviously he has no plan; no way to deal with this. If he does, tell us about it.

Hon Mr Elston: The honourable gentleman indicates that there has been about a 95 per cent increase. I can tell the honourable gentleman that represents less than three per cent of the Ontario automobile insurance marketplace. In relation to what he is trying to do, which is to create out of this issue a very serious, huge and insurmountable problem, it is not that way at all.

What I am trying to do is not a patchwork sort of dealing with instances like this but looking at it from an overall approach where we take a peek at what is being provided and what is required by the consumers in relation to automobile insurance and addressing it in that instance.

I agree with the honourable gentleman that there has been some increase in the use of the facility and that continues to be of interest to us, but I can tell the honourable gentleman that in terms of insurance product services throughout Ontario, we are working very hard on the product reform which will provide the fair and proper product for the people of the province, as he, I am sure, wants to join me in providing to the people of Ontario.

CREDIT CARDS

Ms Collins: My question is for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Recently I received a letter from a constituent who is extremely upset about solicitations mailed to her son from American Express. Her son is a full-time university student with no income.

The letter from American Express states: "Right now, as a university student you are in a special position... With this offer you can get the American Express right now..."

It goes on to say: "You need to show funds from one of several verifiable income sources. It could be a full-time summer or part-time job, a savings account or trust fund, a student grant or from your parents."

There is not one indication as to the amount of interest which is charged by the company when someone fails to pay unpaid balances. My question is, why are credit card companies such as American Express allowed to solicit students who have no visible means of income, suggesting that parents' income or government grants be used?

Hon Mr Wrye: I thank the honourable member for the question and also for sending across to me a copy of the letter that she has just read a portion of into the record.

Certainly the whole area of solicitation, whether it is by mail, such as in this case, or telemarketing—telephone solicitation—is one

which we are examining very closely as we begin to review consumer protection laws in this province. Certainly the member speaks to an area of particular sensitivity in raising the issue of credit. It will be one area that we are looking at and seeing whether we should be, at least, at a very minimum, moving to optimum levels of disclosure.

The member should be aware of two things: first of all, there is a federal-provincial group which is now working on the issue of cost of credit and developing regulations in that regard; second, we already have taken some initiatives. In the past, the issue of unsolicited credit cards arriving at one's home was a major issue, and in amendments to the Consumer Protection Act some years ago that issue was dealt with. So it is certainly within our power to take some action and we are looking at what appropriate measure of intervention is necessary.

Ms Collins: Given the debt load of the average citizen and the difficulties that some people have when they are uninformed and go into debt, would the minister consider eliminating this kind of misleading advertising by making it mandatory that solicitations by credit card companies clearly state all costs associated with using their services?

Hon Mr Wrye: Really, I guess there are two issues here. First of all, I think we have to ask ourselves what the policy initiatives should be, and that is the issue I dealt with in answer to the first question: whether one ought to have disclosure or simply take even stronger measures. But the second issue is one of whether this is actually misleading.

I appreciate receiving this letter. It will be given to the registrar, who will have a look at it to see whether it is misleading. There is a possibility, and it often turns out that rather than being misleading, one would simply say that this letter is incomplete in that it does not disclose to the potential credit card user that there are fees and that there are, in effect, fines through interest charges for unpaid bills.

But we will take a look at this specific American Express initiative for students and see whether there is something that goes beyond being incomplete and gets into the realm of being misleading.

1430

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Mr Wildman: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment in relation to the answer he gave yesterday in this House to the

question from the member for Port Arthur (Mr Kozyra) regarding the class environmental assessment hearings in Thunder Bay into timber management.

In that answer, the minister indicated the hearings were going on much longer than anticipated because many people wanted to make presentations. Is the minister not aware that the reason the hearings have gone on so long now is because of the extensive amount of evidence presented by the Ministry of Natural Resources, and that they have now covered only about 11 panels of the anticipated 17 and have taken up the total amount of time the board expected to go for the full hearing?

If that is the case, can he confirm the government will be allocating more money for interveners, to the extent of \$300,000 to \$350,000 at least, by the end of this month so they will not have to withdraw from the hearings before they can present their own evidence?

Hon Mr Bradley: As I indicated in my response to the member for Port Arthur yesterday, it is my anticipation this matter will be finalized in the very near future. Both the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr Kerrio) and I have identified the fact that a number of people who have made representations believe that further funding will be necessary to continue the case.

The member is correct in noting that much of the evidence provided has been by the Ministry of Natural Resources which, I understand from the minister, wishes to present as much information as possible so that people will be aware of what the ministry doing and will be able to critique it or compliment it, whatever they see fit, in the hearing.

I want to assure the member that I anticipate there will be continued intervener funding. I am not in a position to say the amount in the House at this time, but we do recognize that there have been a number of submissions made to both Natural Resources and Environment in that regard.

Mr Wildman: If the minister is not at this point able to confirm the \$350,000 figure, can he assure the House that the amount allocated will be commensurate with the additional funding the Ministry of Natural Resources itself has spent? Is he not aware that by the end of this fiscal year, the ministry will have spent somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$8 million alone on these hearings? If that is the case, how can the minister not provide enough intervener funding, similar to what has been provided for the Ontario Waste

Management Corp. hearings where 10 times as much has been allocated for interveners as in this case?

Hon Mr Bradley: I think we are talking about separate and different kinds of hearings, and I know one will draw conclusions or comparisons as one sees fit.

I think the member, along with a number of other members, is concerned that those who wish to intervene will be able to do so with adequate expert assistance, not that they do not have some of that themselves but certainly there are costs to be incurred. The Minister of Natural Resources wanted to ensure that as much information was put out as possible, and yes, that does require an allocation of funds from that ministry to ensure that happens. I think the minister would say that if he did not provide this kind of information, there might be criticism.

I want to assure the member that both the Minister of Natural Resources and I are aware of the needs that have been brought to our attention. We want to ensure people have sufficient funds to carry out the responsibilities. Of course, the Environmental Assessment Board itself, through a separate panel, will allocate how much goes to each group. I want to assure him, as I did the member for Port Arthur, that we will have a decision in the very near future. I do not like to make announcements before my colleagues have had the opportunity to process these matters.

ONTARIO HOME RENEWAL PROGRAM FOR DISABLED PERSONS

Mr McLean: I have a question that is directed to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons. I have a letter from him dated 17 April in which he indicates that funding is no longer available under the Ontario home renewal program for disabled persons. As he knows, this program is supposed to provide the necessary financial means to enable disabled individuals to live comfortably in their homes.

A constituent of mine applied under this program so he could add a special shower and toilet unit as well as a sink to his room at home. This constituent will be released from the Lyndhurst Hospital at the end of May and the best the minister can offer is to tell him to wait: "We're out of funds. They'll become available next year." How can the minister be out of funds 17 days into the new year?

Hon Mr Mancini: I want to let the honourable member know that I was speaking about the last fiscal year, which ended 31 March. If the letter conveyed any other view, then I apologize to the

member. The member will have to wait, as will all other members of the Legislature, until the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) brings down his budget. Then the budget will be expanded upon by other ministers as to how their programs will be operated.

The member may recall that yesterday or the day before the Minister of Housing (Ms Hošek) indicated to the House the large number of people who have been assisted over the past year or two. The program has had a very serious uptake, and yes, there is a waiting list.

Mr McLean: I have a supplementary. The minister dated the letter he wrote to me 17 April, which was well into the new year. I do not know why he would indicate to me on that day that he was out of funds, when it was 17 days into the new year.

I also got a letter from the minister just this week with regard to National Access Awareness Week. How can the ministry possibly afford to spend money on advertising and making this awareness week when it has no funds to help the disabled? I understand the situation with regard to the people, that the ministry has helped some 750 across the province, but I understand there are also about another 700 on the waiting list. What are we going to do to get help for these people who are disabled and need help now?

Hon Mr Mancini: I feel very bad that the honourable member opposite is not supportive of National Access Awareness Week, which is supported by the government of Canada, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and 23 national organizations of and for disabled people. These groups feel National Access Awareness Week is very important. We need the support of all members of the Legislature to make Rick Hansen's dream and the dream of many thousands of persons with disabilities a reality. It is our job to try to eliminate both attitudinal and physical barriers.

NATUROPATHY

Mr D. R. Cooke: My question is for the Minister of Health. The recently released report by the Premier's Council on Health Strategy sets out a vision of health for Ontario. It sees an Ontario where people live longer and disease and disability are progressively reduced. The report establishes five goals necessary to achieve that vision, the first of which is to shift the emphasis of health care in Ontario to health promotion and disease prevention.

Philosophically, a good example of this is naturopathy, which seeks to promote lifestyle

and preventive measures against disease, but the recently released health professions legislation review has caused a degree of confusion in the field of naturopathy, some being concerned that they will be charged with practising medicine without a licence. I would like to be able to assure them that is not the case.

Can the minister update the House on the impact of the health professions legislation review and what it will be on the future of naturopathy in the province?

Hon Mrs Caplan: For the information of the member, the health professions legislation review was tabled in this House and is currently under review. I have made a commitment to meet with all those groups affected by the legislative proposals. The position I have taken is that I will be asking the questions, what is in the public interest and what will offer protection to the public?

I would say to the member that the health professions legislation review has not recommended a legislative framework or self-governance for naturopathy. However, even without a legislative framework or regulatory status, naturopaths would be able to continue practising their profession in Ontario.

Mr D. R. Cooke: I take it then the minister will be meeting with the Ontario Naturopathic Association. Will she be discussing these matters and the proposed deregulation with them at that time?

Hon Mrs Caplan: Yes. For the information of the member, there are a number of professions not currently regulated or within the legislative framework, for example, marriage and family therapy, shiatsu therapy, acupuncture and psychoanalysis, just to name a few. As I have said, I will be meeting with all those groups affected by the legislation and have committed to meet with the representatives of the naturopathic profession as well, to hear from them their response to the legislative proposals of Mr Schwartz and the HPLR.

1440

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Miss Martel: I have a question for the Minister of Labour concerning Bill 162. On 18 April, the standing committee on resources development finished its last public hearing on the bill. Over 330 groups and individuals came before us to talk about the bill. Many more would have come before us, but the Liberal members on the committee blocked every motion we put forward to extend the hearings.

I would recall that the Liberal government insisted that every doctor who wanted to be heard on Bill 94 would be heard, and that did occur. The overwhelming majority of the groups that came before us said the bill could not be fixed or amended, but should be scrapped. I want to ask the minister if it is his intention now to do the decent thing and withdraw Bill 162.

Hon Mr Sorbara: I am interested in the statistics the member for Sudbury East has provided to the House in her question. My own understanding is that the hearings were very successful. A wide variety of views were expressed and indeed, notwithstanding the motions she or others apparently made every day for extension of the hearings, virtually all members of the committee felt that notwithstanding that the briefs were good, solid and well researched, by the time the hearings were coming to an end the submissions were getting somewhat repetitive.

We will be looking at and analysing those submissions within the ministry, as I am sure all the members of the resources development committee will be doing and have been doing, as the bill moves to its next phase, which is clause-by-clause in the committee.

Miss Martel: I am sorry if the Liberal members of that committee found it repetitive, but I guess they did not want to hear what the good people had to say, which was to scrap the bill. The ministry spent some \$46,000 of taxpayers' money producing a pamphlet entitled *Reforming Workers' Compensation in Ontario*, wherein it said: "These changes"—that is, Bill 162—"are the result of a great deal of study. The government talked to representatives of labour, business and injured workers themselves to put together a plan for a better, fairer system of workers' compensation. All of the changes are included in Bill 162."

In fact, not one employer, labourer, injured workers' group or legal clinic could say when they were before us that they had in any way been consulted by his ministry before this bill was introduced. There was no consultation, and in fact this pamphlet is grossly misleading. I want to ask the minister, given that there was no consultation, will he withdraw the bill and begin a process of real consultation with all of the stakeholders involved in this important issue?

Hon Mr Sorbara: I do not know about the use of the word "misleading" by the member for Sudbury East, but let me tell her just how inconsistent her position has been over the course of the last several months. She is the one who at

one and the same time has argued in this place that the bill must be immediately scrapped, and almost in the same breath, has argued that the public hearings must go on ad infinitum. I do not see how those two positions can ever be resolved.

Let me tell the member for Sudbury East about consultation. The issue of the permanent partial disability system under the Workers' Compensation Act has been the subject of debate in this House and the subject of three reports to government, each of which has had the broadest base of consultation imaginable, culminating in a third report prepared by Dr Paul Weiler on the whole question of permanent partial disability. Similarly, the issue of rehabilitation, and vocational rehabilitation in particular, has been the subject in this province of a very extensive consultation process culminating in the report of Maria Minna and Wally Majesky.

The consultation continued through the public hearings. I am satisfied that as a result of that—

The Speaker: Thank you.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

Mrs Cunningham: My question today is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. We have all heard the minister's government on numerous occasions publicly state that it is committed to deinstitutionalization. If the minister is really committed to fulfilling this promise, why are so many families with disabled children being forced to consider placing their children in institutions because the necessary home support program is simply not available?

Hon Mr Sweeney: The honourable member will be well aware of the fact that we have a number of programs out there to assist parents who have made a personal decision to keep their children at home. The additional sums of money and resources we have made available have gone up every single year. We are now at close to—I cannot remember the exact figure, but the number is fairly significant.

As the member will realize, the difficulty is that we have also indicated we want to broaden that support, not only to families that have developmentally handicapped children but also to those same families whose handicapped children become adults and to families who have physically handicapped children. We are not going to take away in any way from the first group, but obviously we cannot keep adding to that one and not do anything for the other two.

Therefore, we have said to the first group of families: "We will continue to provide service for you. We ask you to continue to access a whole

range of services that are out in the community above and beyond what we are able to provide, but also to recognize that if physically handicapped—

The Speaker: Thank you. Order.

Mrs Cunningham: We certainly commend the minister's record. The number he was looking for, quite frankly, is \$111 million. It is substantial—

Hon Mr Bradley: Mike Harris says, "Save money."

Mrs Cunningham: —but it is a very difficult thing, I say to the Minister of the Environment, for parents to have to go to area offices and to ask for support so that they can stay home with their children or keep their children in their own homes.

During the estimates we realized the government withdrew funding that amounted to some \$2.5 million from this program. It is not a lot but it would help. What we would like the minister to do today is to assure us that at least \$2.5 million will be put back into the program, plus the regular inflationary increase. Would he commit in this House today to do that?

Hon Mr Sweeney: I can assure the honourable member the budget for the program for the three groups I have just identified will be significantly higher than that again.

DETROIT INCINERATOR

Mr M. C. Ray: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. The Minister of the Environment will know that the Detroit incinerator is a matter of continuing concern to the residents of my city, the city of Windsor. The Detroit incinerator is the largest incinerator in North America and when fully operational will handle 2,000 tons of garbage per day and dump emissions upon our city which we are not pleased with.

The incinerator is now fully constructed and residents of the city of Windsor would like some assurance from the minister that he has not given up in his pursuit of the best available technology for this plant. What can the minister tell the residents of Windsor in this regard?

Hon Mr Bradley: The member may recall that on 15 April 1987, the Ministry of the Environment filed suit in the Michigan state court to force Detroit to install what we call state-of-the-art pollution control technology on the proposed incinerator. As the member has pointed out, the Detroit incinerator is being built with only electrostatic precipitators. We believe

the scrubber baghouse technology is far superior to that and I certainly indicated that to the mayor of Detroit in a meeting with him.

As the member may be aware, the suit was moved to federal district court and was dismissed by a Reagan-appointed judge on 25 February 1988. The ministry went through the procedure of appealing the federal court judge's decision to dismiss the case and sought leave to return the case to the Michigan state court.

1450

Mr M. C. Ray: Can the minister, therefore, please now tell us what is the status of that lawsuit by the Ontario government against Michigan authorities?

Hon Mr Bradley: We have just learned that the appeal court has found in our favour. In a strongly worded two-to-one decision, the appeal court, I am informed, reversed the federal district judge's ruling that the Michigan court did not have jurisdiction, as Ontario had asked. The appeal court vacated the judge's dismissal of our original suit, as Ontario had asked, and the appeal court instructed Judge Hackett to send our suit back to state court which, of course, is where Ontario originally filed the suit.

This, in my view, is an important step in the right direction in this battle to ensure that the people of Essex county and Windsor are not subjected to the kinds of emissions we believe they would be if only an electrostatic precipitator were used in that incinerator.

ST PETER'S HOSPITAL

Mr Charlton: I have a question for the Minister of Health regarding St Peter's Hospital in Hamilton. The minister will be aware that St Peter's is the only chronic care hospital in the Hamilton-Wentworth region. Some 24 months ago, the hospital made submissions to her ministry regarding the need for enhanced funding requirements to bring St Peter's Hospital up to the same level as other chronic hospitals in the province.

The minister will be aware that during the 24 months since that original submission, there have been various contacts with her ministry, including the ministry having sent in patient care consultants. The recommendations made by those patient care consultants strongly supported the position of the hospital in terms of its requirements for enhanced funding. The ministry directed the hospital to submit a budget and a critical path to implement the recommendations of the patient care consultants.

On 27 April, the minister informed the hospital that it would be receiving only 19 per cent of the money it requires in each of the next two years. Can the minister explain to the House, when she has said here on a consistent basis that her prime concern is patient care, how she can so blatantly ignore the recommendations of her patient care consultants?

Hon Mrs Caplan: For the information of the member for Hamilton Mountain, he would be interested to know that St Peter's Hospital, which provides quality care to patients and residents in the Hamilton area, received a three-year accreditation in April 1989, along with praise from the independent accreditation surveyors. I would quote that they were "a model geriatric and teaching unit."

I would say to him that some time ago the ministry received a request from the hospital for approximately \$1 million. That request, over the course of time, had increased. I spoke directly with the board chairman and told him they would be receiving slightly over a \$1-million base increase over the next two years. While everyone would like to have more, we believe this will go a significant way in expanding its services in the areas of physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology, as well as nursing clinical specialists.

St Peter's plays an important role in Hamilton, and the member would do it a disservice by suggesting that it provides other than quality patient care, because it provides fine care to the residents in its charge.

Mr Allen: The minister is weaving and dodging her way through the statistics. The simple fact is that the gap between that hospital and its peer hospitals in other communities is such that St Peter's can offer, in comparison to them, 60 minutes less of services and care per day. What the minister has provided by a 19 per cent add-on is only 10 minutes' makeup of that 60-minute gap.

How does the minister really expect St Peter's and Hamiltonians to accept that kind of discriminatory response from the Minister of Health?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I think the question by the member opposite does a disservice to the quality care provided by St Peter's Hospital. I would repeat again that an independent accreditation team suggested it was a model geriatric facility and teaching unit and gave it a three-year accreditation.

We are working with the hospital to provide for additional staffing and additional programming, given available resources. We are making

progress in working together. Yes, I would say to him that we have worked co-operatively and will continue to do so.

HAZARDOUS WASTES

Mr Pollock: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. The Paudash Lake Cottage Association is concerned about uranium pilings. They have asked both the federal Minister of the Environment and the provincial minister about these pilings.

The federal government has committed its money for this particular study. When is the minister going to commit the money for this particular study?

Hon Mr Bradley: It seems to me that we funded the first phase of this particular project, if my recollection is correct, and that we have been involved and have been providing assistance in terms of ministry staff expertise and so on.

The member would be aware that the pre-eminent responsibility, when dealing with radioactive waste, is in fact with the federal government. We have, as I say, for some period of time attempted to work with them to assess the degree of the problem. I have communicated directly by letter with some of the member's constituents in this matter. We are there to help out in whatever way we can and I anticipate we will continue to help out in that way.

Mr Pollock: The information I have is that they have got no funding at all for any particular study. That is a major concern to me. I do not know how dangerous these pilings are. I would hope the ministry would do everything it could to relieve the fears of the Paudash Lake Cottage Association.

If the minister has any information I certainly hope he would forward it to me and keep me informed about this particular situation. Has the ministry never been involved in any of these studies in regard to uranium tailings and that sort of thing?

Hon Mr Bradley: We have on an ongoing basis been involved. As I say, we have a good degree of co-operation with the federal government in matters of these kinds. The member may know that because of the different jurisdictions, sometimes it is not the federal Department of the Environment with which we deal.

There is a department which is responsible federally for radioactive materials, the department which deals with Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd, for instance. I think the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is often involved

in these, as well as the Department of the Environment, which, of course, has an interest.

Provincially, in terms of mine tailings, for instance, the Ministry of Mines, the Ministry of Labour, through occupational health and safety, and the Ministry of the Environment have an interest. We have all been contributing to try, first, to determine, as the member would like, the extent of the problem that exists there and then to look at potential remedial action.

The member would like to know that I was at the meeting of resource and environment ministers in Montreal a couple of weeks ago, where matters of this kind, of cleanups, through a combined federal-provincial fund could be effected. I think that would be one we would look at as potential use of a provincial-federal program, a superfund in other words, to deal with matters of that kind; as well, of course, as finding those who would be originally responsible to make sure they look after their obligations. I will keep the member informed on that.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mrs Grier: My question is to the Minister of Housing. The minister will be aware of my concern about proposals for the waterfront in my riding, in an area known as the motel strip, where the city of Etobicoke proposes to allow 2,700 units of luxury condominiums on a 50-acre site.

In response to an earlier inquiry of mine, the minister assured me that her ministry was working with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to make sure there was a better distribution of housing types within the area and that the 25 per cent affordable might apply.

I am now concerned to find, in a report to the Crombie commission, that Mr Crombie's work group states, "The city has indicated that the nonprofit component—" on the motel strip "—may be built offsite."

Does the minister consider that her requirement that 25 per cent of all new development be affordable housing is satisfied if that affordable housing is built offsite?

Hon Ms Hošek: I am glad to respond to the question from the member. The concern we have and the kind of message we have been giving to all municipalities, as the member will know, is that we expect them to plan for making sure that when new development happens, at least a quarter of the units will be affordable.

1500

It is up to the municipalities to indicate the neighbourhoods within which planning of this sort will take place. The issue is how to define a

neighbourhood so that within a new neighbourhood or new development process, 25 per cent of the housing units will be affordable.

Mrs Grier: This particular neighbourhood is 50 acres between Lakeshore Boulevard and the water; no housing yet built, 2,700 units planned. The first developer on the site is a company called Camrost Developments Inc., which also happens to own an industrial site bounded by the Queen Elizabeth Way and the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks and close to the sewage treatment plant. That is where it wants to put its affordable housing.

Can the minister give us a commitment that she will not allow the waterfront to be used for luxury condominiums and the affordable housing to be on an inland industrial site next to the sewage treatment plant?

Hon Ms Hošek: The member opposite knows that Mr Crombie's report is in the form of advice to Metropolitan Toronto council. I know that she will work with us to achieve our goal of making sure that an appropriate mix of affordable housing is there in all new development on the lakeshore and all new development in Etobicoke.

HOSPITAL SERVICES

Mr McLean: I have a question of the Minister of Health. She will no doubt remember that on 8 February of this year I presented a copy of a petition signed by 870 people calling for the expansion of heart bypass surgery services. This petition resulted from a series of delays and postponements of heart bypass for Lloyd Crawford of Oro Station.

This man cannot work. He has been waiting for a heart bypass. It was set for 20 June; now it is postponed until 26 June. This man and his family are very upset. What are we going to do to get these people in for their heart bypass operations?

Hon Mrs Caplan: In fact, I would say to the member opposite that we are working co-operatively with cardiovascular specialists right across this province to build the kind of network we need to ensure that the appropriate definitions are in place and are consistent so that people can be referred to the location which has services available in a timely manner.

I would say to him also that we are in the process of expanding capacity in Hamilton. He knows that is coming on stream. We have already expanded capacity in both Sudbury and Ottawa and we are working in downtown Toronto, in fact, to bring up the Sunnybrook Medical Centre proposal as quickly as possible.

If the member would send to me the details of this particular case, I will make sure they are directed to the appropriate people to make sure they are properly assessed. But I would say to him that it is a question of medical judgement to determine whether an individual is considered emergency, urgent or elective. We do not interfere with medical judgements in these matters.

The Speaker: That completes the allotted time for oral questions and responses and, hopefully, the end of the time for the private conversations.

PETITIONS

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr Mackenzie: I have a petition: "To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We urge the Liberal government not to proceed with Bill 162, An Act to amend the Workers' Compensation Act, Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1980, chapter 539 as amended by Statutes of Ontario, 1981, chapter 30; Statutes of Ontario, 1982, chapter 61; Statutes of Ontario, 1983, chapter 45; Statutes of Ontario, 1984, chapter 38; Statutes of Ontario, 1984, chapter 58; Statutes of Ontario, 1985, chapter 3; Statutes of Ontario, 1985, chapter 17; and Statutes of Ontario, 1986, chapter 64, section 69,

"Because Bill 162 contains the most significant changes to the Ontario system of workers' compensation contemplated for many years, and yet the Minister of Labour, as reported in the media, wants the bill passed and implemented by the end of 1988—in other words, without an adequate process for public consultation, debate and discussion; and

"Because Bill 162 represents an attack on injured workers and their families and all of those people who have fought over the years to achieve fairness and justice for injured workers and their families; and

"Because Bill 162 will eliminate the current lifetime pension for lifetime disability and replace it with a dual award system combining a lump sum and actual wage-loss award benefits that has been rejected by injured workers, their advocacy groups, community legal workers and lawyers working on their behalf and by the trade union movement since it was first proposed for implementation in Ontario in the 1980 Weiler report and the Conservative government's 1981 white paper; and

"Because Bill 162 virtually ignores the devastating critique and recommendations of the Majesky-Minna task force report on vocational rehabilitation that was submitted to the Minister of Labour and suppressed by the Liberal government until April 1988; and

"Because Bill 162 gives legislative form to the unacceptable and reactionary policy of restricting access to supplement awards announced by the Workers' Compensation Board in 1987; and

"Because Bill 162 rejects an injured worker's right to appeal decisions within the adjudication process and elsewhere, notably the percentage 'impairment rating' and reinstatement; and

"Because throughout Bill 162 injured workers are made subject to increased discretionary power at the hands of Workers' Compensation Board functionaries and made subject to even more intrusive, invasive and demeaning assaults on their dignity, their privacy and their right to fair and just treatment."

It is signed by nine residents working with the Simcoe County Injured Workers Association. I have affixed my signature and I support it.

LOTTERY PROFITS

Mrs Cunningham: I have a petition with regard to Bill 119 that has been signed by 442 residents of London, to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads:

"We, the undersigned, believe the windfall profits received from all lotteries should be used to offset underfunding to our Ontario hospitals. This will allow our hospitals to serve us in a manner we so rightfully deserve. Not to channel these funds under Bill 119 would be a disgrace undermining our intelligence."

I have signed that one and I have another as well, if I could read it in at this point in time.

SCHOOL OPENING AND CLOSING EXERCISES

Mrs Cunningham: This one has to do with the issue of the Lord's Prayer. I have two sets of petitions, composed of more than 1,000 signatures each, from residents of Middlesex county and Elgin county, to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We, concerned citizens of Middlesex and Elgin counties, are expressing our extreme concern over the removal of the Lord's Prayer and scripture reading from our school system.

"We strongly recommend that it be reinstated and the basics of the Christian faith be taught to our children.

"The Charter of Rights and Freedoms states that Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God, and we want to go on record that we will not tolerate the removal of those principles.

"We find the Toronto book of prayers and readings very unacceptable in our area."

I have added my signature to that.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Miss Martel: I have a petition addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We urge the Liberal government not to proceed with Bill 162, An Act to amend the Workers' Compensation Act,

"Because Bill 162 contains the most significant changes to the Ontario system of workers' compensation contemplated for many years, and yet the Minister of Labour, as reported in the media, wants the bill passed and implemented by the end of 1988—in other words, without an adequate process for public consultation, debate and discussion; and

"Because Bill 162 represents an attack on injured workers and their families and all of those people who have fought over the years to achieve fairness and justice for injured workers and their families; and

"Because Bill 162 will eliminate the current lifetime pension for lifetime disability and replace it with a dual award system combining a lump sum and actual wage-loss award benefits that has been rejected by injured workers, their advocacy groups, community legal workers and lawyers working on their behalf and by the trade union movement since it was first proposed for implementation in Ontario by the 1980 Weiler report and the Conservative government's 1981 white paper; and

"Because Bill 162 virtually ignores the devastating critique and recommendations of the Majesky-Minna task force report on vocational rehabilitation that was submitted to the Minister of Labour and suppressed by the Liberal government until April 1988; and

"Because Bill 162 gives legislative form to the unacceptable and reactionary policy of restricting access to supplement awards announced by the Workers' Compensation Board in 1987; and

"Because Bill 162 restricts an injured worker's right to appeal decisions within the adjudication process and elsewhere, notably the percentage 'impairment rating' and reinstatement; and

"Because throughout Bill 162, injured workers are made subject to increased discretionary power at the hands of Workers' Compensation Board functionaries and made subject to ever more intrusive, invasive and demeaning assaults on their dignity, their privacy and their right to fair and just treatment."

This is signed by 41 people in Simcoe. I agree with them entirely and I have affixed my signature to the petition.

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TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION

Mr Keyes: "To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that all teachers who retired prior to May 31, 1982, have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than at the present seven or 10 years.

"The proposed amendment would make the five-year criteria applicable to all retired teachers and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

The petition contains 96 signatures and an endorsement of the proposed amendment. I have also affixed my signature hereto.

PUBLIC SECTOR PENSION PLANS

Mr Runciman: I have a petition signed by approximately 400 residents of my riding:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned employees of the Ontario public service, demand a fully negotiable and jointly managed pension plan without any reductions in our salary."

TOBACCO TAX

Mr Villeneuve: I too have a petition, signed by 361 residents in the riding that I represent. It is addressed:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, the Treasurer and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Cigarette taxes have increased 300 per cent over eight years. Ontario imposes the highest tax on fine-cut tobacco in Canada.

"We, the undersigned taxpayers aged 18 years and over, call upon the government of Ontario to maintain tobacco taxes at their present level and not increase them in the upcoming budget."

I have endorsed and signed this petition.

Mr Pope: I have a petition of a similar form, signed by 1,230 residents of the city of Timmins:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Hold the line on tobacco taxes. Cigarette taxes have gone up 300 per cent over eight years. Ontario imposes the highest tax on fine-cut tobacco in Canada.

"We, the undersigned taxpayers aged 18 years and over, call upon the government of Ontario to maintain tobacco taxes at their present level and not increase them again this year."

I have affixed my signature to that petition.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the amendment to the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Mr Mahoney: I am delighted to have the member for London North (Mrs Cunningham) join me. As a matter of fact, I was going to open my comments today by telling the member for London North that I think her mother-in-law has excellent taste and judgement. Apparently, the member's mother-in-law was watching the debate last night and thought I looked like a very friendly individual. I can assure Mrs Cunningham at home that I am indeed a friendly individual and delighted to be a friend of the member for London North.

Just to give equal time, I should also ensure that I say hello to my mother-in-law, or there will be no living with her. Edna, how are you? I will be in big trouble if I do not do that.

I know that members would be disappointed, particularly those opposite, if I did not continue with my comments, particularly with regard to the economic leadership that has been shown by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology, and indeed by this government and particularly by the formation of the Premier's Council in 1986.

When the clock ran out last evening, I was partway through a description of the Premier's Council, its function and some of the things that it has accomplished. Just to ensure that the honourable members, particularly those oppo-

site, do not miss a thing, I am going to go back a little bit in my comments, to the beginning.

I will not take members all the way back to the points about the small business advocacy role or about what great leadership this government is showing in the area of small business, being of course the economic engine that drives this province very substantially. I will not do that, I am sure much to the relief of the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr Faubert) and others.

But I would like to go back a little bit to the points about the Premier's Council because I think it is extremely important that we realize that in 1986, as a result of a feeling that the economic stability of this province was so vital to our future and our children's future, the Premier (Mr Peterson) created the Premier's Council because he recognized that our industrial and social infrastructures are coming under unprecedented pressure.

In fact, since its inception the Premier's Council has developed seven centres of excellence to improve Ontario's research and development capabilities in key areas of technological opportunity such as space, and I would note to my colleague the member for Mississauga North (Mr Offer) the great success in our city in the aerospace industry with new materials, telecommunications and information technology.

The council has also designated six centres of entrepreneurship in Ontario colleges and universities, to help instil in students an awareness of the opportunities and challenges involved in running their own businesses. As I stressed earlier, it is another example of the leadership in showing young people what entrepreneurship is all about and helping them to look towards a positive future.

The council has also developed a program to provide matching grants to industrial research projects involving promising new processes and technologies. Further, it has developed a program to encourage universities, once again, and the private sector to collaborate in various research projects.

The council has participated in a major review of competitiveness in the Ontario economy. It was particularly necessary to do that in light of the free trade agreement and the implications to all of our businesses in this community of doing business in the United States, and I heard an interesting analogy from my friends at Carassauga today that I think I will share with members. They said that they felt the difference between the United States and Canada is that in the United States they have President Bush, Bob Hope and

Johnny Cash. After last week's budget, we have Brian Mulroney, no hope and no cash.

Interjections.

Mr Mahoney: Members did not like that one? It was not mine. I borrowed it from the fellows from Carassauga, but it really does point out the serious impact of the federal budget on this government.

We have heard the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) talk in terms of losing substantial revenues that will not be coming in because the damage to the economy created by the Wilson budget will leave us in a position where our revenues will be down. I think it is vitally important that we recognize that and work with bodies like the Premier's Council in an attempt to show encouragement to the private sector in our business communities and make them successful.

The result of these deliberations, which by the way went through over 1,000 consultations with people in the private sector, was the report that has been referred to on numerous occasions, *Competing in the New Global Economy*, published approximately a year ago.

This report identified a number of major challenges facing the Ontario economy and made a series of recommendations to deal with those challenges. It recommended assistance to help our mature industries modernize and beef up their infrastructure; it outlined policies to help new industries grow and prosper; it recommended ways to foster a more entrepreneurial spirit and entrepreneurial culture in this province, and it suggested ways to improve our science and technology infrastructure.

This government, which has been accused by members of the opposition of failing to translate words into action, has implemented a new direction for industrial restructuring by establishing the office of the industrial restructuring commissioner. He will assess competitive factors facing selected industries in order to avoid, wherever possible, plant closures and job losses—once again, I say plant closures and job losses primarily as a result of the implementation of the free trade agreement.

1520

But we are going beyond that and we are moving out to find other markets for our businesses. As I mentioned, in 1992 there will be the creation of a new common market in Europe, close to 350 million people without any tariffs or barriers, and we believe that the Ontario business community can actively be involved in taking its products to Europe, perhaps using the United Kingdom as a launching pad but with the

assistance of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology.

The government has also acted to improve assistance for research and development by introducing the R and D superallowance in the last provincial budget and the government has announced the establishment of the technical personnel assistance program to subsidize the cost to small firms of hiring technical personnel.

We have also announced the strategic procurement plan, which will provide \$25 million to companies towards contracts that will allow them to develop new products that the government is likely to need in the future.

This government is also proceeding with the recommendation to refocus the activities of the Ontario Development Corp, in line with the Premier's Council recommendation.

The council's report also stated that the ultimate challenge facing this province is the development of our most fundamental natural resource, the minds and the skill of our workforce. This ranges from education through training through labour adjustment. Clearly that is an area that this throne speech is addressing, along with the Premier's Council.

In the future the council will be looking at the skill requirements in the new global economy, adjustment issues in declining industries, the management and implementation of new technology, training, apprenticeship and the assurance of technical skills, demographic and educational trends in this province, the role of organized labour in meeting new skill requirements and the potential for business, labour and institutional linkages.

I think the Premier's Council has really sent a message to the private sector that says this government has confidence in the private sector. Be it through working with the boards of trade, chambers of commerce and the industrial associations around the province or be it through working with the small business community, which I have the privilege of doing as the advocate, or working with the larger industries through the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr Kwinter), we are sending a united message through the throne speech that this Liberal government truly does believe that we must continue to provide the leadership to build on our economic strengths to ensure tomorrow's growth for our children.

There are other items in the throne speech I did not get a chance to get to yesterday and I would just like to take a moment, if I might, to comment on some of them. Members opposite have made

the remark that this government has some difficulty translating words into action. Let me share with them some of the words that have been translated into action in the social assistance area.

We are all well familiar with the Thomson report. As the member for Muskoka-Georgian Bay (Mr Black) enters the room, he will recall that approximately two weeks ago, I was in his riding speaking to a group on small business. I was particularly interested when I asked the members of group when we were in the workshop session what the main problems were that they had as a small business community.

They identified the first problem as not having good representation—no, they did not say that.

Mr Faubert: It's on the record.

Mr Mahoney: Is it on the record? Well, I did not say that.

They identified the first problem as the shortage of skilled and trained workers. Interestingly enough, they identified the second problem as difficulties in the areas of social assistance and, in fact, not unlike comments by Conrad Black and others, the business community in that riding felt that the government should create incentives for people to go to work and get off welfare or unemployment insurance or family benefits. They felt it was—I found the terminology they used was quite interesting—

Mr Wildman: Are you quoting Conrad Black?

Mr Mahoney: No, it was not Conrad Black, it was Ken Black's constituents who were saying that it was important to tighten up the social net. In fact, one of the men said that if you tighten up a net, you make a trampoline. I thought that was a very appropriate comment, and indeed I think that is the philosophy of this government, the philosophy of giving a hand up and not a handout, which would be advocated by some of our illustrious and not-so-illustrious colleagues opposite on the far left, who of course would think that just giving a handout is indeed the solution. We believe in giving a hand up and we believe in, as the constituent in Muskoka-Georgian Bay said, tightening up that net and turning it into a trampoline.

To prove that and to prove that this government, through the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr Sweeney), has indeed translated words into action, let me just give members some information from a briefing note from that ministry.

There have been six announcements of major improvements since 1985 in the family benefits

assistance program and the general welfare assistance program. These are primarily for the disabled and single parents under the family benefits assistance program. Under general welfare, it is delivered by the municipalities, primarily for the unemployed and those waiting for other types of income. The total cost of these six announcements since the Liberal Party took office is \$337 million. This represents an increase of 23.9 per cent in benefit levels over a three-year period.

In January 1986, \$81.6 million was made available to allow for a four per cent increase in the general rate, and a special increase, for example, in new family benefits assistance: child's winter clothing, \$50 for two-adult families on GWA; seven per cent on basic allowances earmarked for children. Recognizing that around 41 per cent of the people on welfare have been identified by Mr Thomson as being children, I think it is vitally important that we recognize that this government, and particularly that ministry, is doing something to help those children who cannot help themselves.

In September 1986, \$25 million was made available for the special improvements in shelter subsidy program; in January 1987, \$72.7 million, a general rate increase again, plus special increases of \$16 for older children and the extension of child's winter clothing to GWA; in June 1987, \$54 million, a special \$50 increase in the guaranteed annual income system for the disabled allowance and a \$1.8-million increase in comfort allowance for the nonelderly in institutions; in January 1988, \$82.6 million, a general rate increase of five per cent, plus an eight per cent increase in maximum shelter subsidy; in June 1988, \$20 million, permits utility costs paid separately from rent to be included in the definition of shelter costs.

These are not just words. These are words translated into action.

We are all familiar with the fact that George Thomson was appointed in July 1986 to conduct the independent public review. Fourteen communities were visited for public hearings; there were 1,500 briefs and submissions, proof that this government is an open, accessible government looking for input from the public. The report was received in September 1988, outlining a blueprint for reform of outdated features. This is a government especially interested in improving those work incentives that were identified by the business community in the Muskoka-Georgian Bay area and, quite clearly, in the rest of the province.

In July 1987, there was a signing of a four-cornered agreement that is the first example representing a new era of federal-provincial co-operation regarding employment programs for social assistance recipients. This was a \$100-million program over two years, with \$50 million being provincial dollars, to assist 20,000 social recipients prepare for and find employment.

In the area of dealing with poverty, which is the third item referred to in the throne speech, it is very clear that the Minister of Community and Social Services and this government are showing tremendous leadership in this area, in translating those words into dollars and those dollars into community programs to benefit those who are at a particular time in their lives when they are having some difficulty and to provide incentives for those people to find other jobs and other ways of life that will build a better future for them and their children.

Mr Black: Action, not just talking.

Mr Mahoney: That is exactly right. The proof is there. I find it somewhat comical actually when people stand up and say that we do not translate words into action, when they attack this throne speech, because there is proof of what we have done in every area of social concern, social care, social policy, in every area of providing economic leadership.

Let me touch on just a few of the concepts in health. No one will argue, I think, that our health budget has reached a proportion, 33 per cent, that is unacceptable: \$1 out of every \$3 that come into the provincial Treasury goes out to pay for our health care services. The parties opposite can stand up and accuse the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) of not doing this or not doing that, when in reality our Health minister is facing a crisis, one that any responsible legislative authority would recognize as a serious crisis.

1530

There are things that we must do to get the message out to the people. I would suggest that there are in the recent program put out by the Minister of Health, Deciding the Future of our Health Care, a number of things the ministry is undertaking that will be addressed as a result of the statements in the throne speech.

The first is that we must enhance the role and the responsibility of the health consumers. In evolving the system to more effectively address consumers' needs and to encourage their participation, the Ministry of Health aims to provide consumers with as much information as possible

on both their personal health and the health care system.

I spoke some months ago on a private member's resolution on a Thursday morning.

Mr R. F. Johnston: That's when he started his speech.

Mr Mahoney: I may be speaking some months from now on the same thing, I say to my friend. One never knows. I hope the member will be patient with me; I am new at this.

I spoke some time ago on that private member's resolution which called for the government to move towards the establishment of more of what I call community health centres. There are different buzzwords and names for them all, but I referred to the one in Sault Ste Marie.

The one in Sault Ste Marie is clearly a model that can and should be followed in other parts of this province, and many members in this House are quite familiar with it. It was built primarily through the blood, sweat and tears of the members of the United Steelworkers of America local at Algoma and with their money and contributions.

In my view it has accomplished exactly the very first point the ministry makes, and that is it has provided those consumers in Sault Ste Marie with as much information as possible on their personal health and the health care system. It has created a sense of ownership for the people in that city.

If you think of that city—it happens to be my home town, so I know a little bit about it—you have got a population base of roughly 82,000 or 83,000 people. Yet they have two general hospitals within a hundred yards of each other downtown and one of the most dynamic health care centres in this country and in this province. They would appear, on the surface, to be overburdened with facilities for health care, but in reality they have a sense of ownership of their health care system and do not abuse it. We must work towards that in every area of this province.

We must also help consumers to enable them to make informed choices on lifestyle issues affecting their health and the kinds of treatments they receive, to encourage them to use the services that are available in this province wisely, to provide opportunities for consumers to participate in effective health care delivery decisions in their community, to safeguard patients' rights and to provide more vehicles for consumer participation in decision-making and review of complaints, malpractice and abuse of the system.

The second point the Health ministry has embarked on, which is outlined in this paper, *Deciding the Future of Our Health Care*, really comes under the fifth item, accessibility to quality health care for every ontarian regardless of ability to pay," as a fundamental value of the Liberal Party. I say that no one could argue that: it clearly is a fundamental value.

The second point is strengthening community-based health care. The ministry's future directions focus on developing more community-based services, so that consumers can receive care as close to home as possible. It is very important that we decentralize, that we go out into those communities and provide health care as close to home as possible. That has not been the case in the past 50 years in this province. People who live in northern Ontario will tell you that for the slightest problem in the old days they used to have to fly down to Toronto or drive or take a bus to go to a hospital to get the care.

There are still certain specialty areas where that is required, but it is very important that on a general basis in health care, we provide that care as close to home as possible. These objectives include: creating a stronger network of community programs; integrating services and promoting equitable access, and providing alternatives to institutional care. I think that this country institutionalizes our senior citizens on a per capita basis more than any country, certainly in North America and probably in the world.

That really is, to a certain degree, a little bit of a condemnation. There are some members here who are not far away from requiring such ambulatory care. There are not many, but there are some who are not far away. I would hope that members might have an opportunity to grow old with grace, living within their communities and not being put into an institution where it becomes very impersonal.

I think it is very important that we do that and that we also create a balance of long-term care services, including home care, community care and extended care. We must emphasize health promotion and disease prevention. Again, this is the minister's program. We must create incentives for hospitals to develop outreach and ambulatory care programs.

The third area where the ministry is working is in maintaining the role of public hospitals, including psychiatric hospitals and university teaching hospitals. In addressing the area of public hospitals, the ministry's initiatives and future directions are developing a fair and equitable funding process for all hospitals and

planning capital spending on a regional basis with hospitals working together as part of a co-ordinated plan.

Something I am not convinced has happened in this province is working together on a co-ordinated plan: not competing with each other for the hospital or for the health care dollar that might be available from the ministry, but getting together to best serve the community on a co-operative basis. We want to create incentives for management efficiencies and cost-effective care delivery, to create incentives for outreach and ambulatory care programs as alternatives to hospital care and to link the hospital to the community care network more effectively.

In the area of psychiatric hospitals, the ministry aims to develop a strategic planning process for the future of the psychiatric hospital system. In the area of university teaching hospitals, the objective is to strengthen its commitment to a stable and rationalized funding system for clinical research, sophisticated teaching services and quality patient care.

Once again, I think that any statements by members opposite that this throne speech lacks direction needs to be really tempered and followed up with the documentation which clearly proves that if we take each point and examine what the ministry is doing, they clearly do have a plan.

The fourth item by the Minister of Health is integrating private sector strengths and resources. That is a theme that runs through the entire government. Whether we are talking about the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology, which I will admit is more geared toward the private sector than perhaps some of the social ministries, or whether we are talking about even the Ministry of Labour, which I think deals very effectively with the business community, or whatever ministry it is, it is a common thread throughout this government that we are looking at ways of forming new partnerships to create new ways of doing things as we move toward the end of the century.

The Ministry of Health is committed to carefully evaluating all aspects of private sector involvement in health care in terms of quality and accountability. The ministry intends to work to encourage all providers of health care products and services, public and private, to inform consumers and give them opportunities to exercise good judgement; to examine private sector management techniques for delivering more effective services; to ensure public accountability, regardless of who delivers the

service; to develop policies in the area of existing private sector ownership on issues such as rate of return, financial accountability and quality control, and to encourage the development of technology and manufacture of health care services.

How many glasses of water would one need to remain healthy in this wonderful province? I know that my colleagues are sending the page over here with water in an attempt to distract me and it is not going to work, but I will take a water break. The member for York Mills (Mr J. B. Nixon) can be the custodian. That was not water, actually. What are they sending me? What is going on here?

1540

Hon Mr Wrye: Oh they didn't.

Mr Mahoney: No, they did not. It is water. Trust me. The members can trust me, I am from the government.

The next item under the ministry's program is to improve the quality assurance and treatment effectiveness. This area represents another crucial issue for examination that affects both the quality and cost of health care, including actual treatments, laboratory testing and use of pharmaceuticals.

The ministry's objectives in this area will be to improve and transmit knowledge on treatment outcomes and validation and to encourage all health professions to take an active role in implementing outcome review by using methods of technology assessment to evaluate new high-technology equipment, drugs and medical procedures.

This actually ties very nicely, in my view, into the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology as well, because we are very clearly in the forefront in helping develop new technologies and we are interested in encouraging industry, be it in the medical field, the scientific field or any other area developing new products. We are interested in providing an atmosphere in this province that will help them to achieve their goals.

The final item on the strategy of deciding the future of our health care by the Minister of Health is strengthening the team of physicians, nurses and other health professionals. The wide range of health professionals in Ontario provides an important diversity of services and public choice in approaches to health care. The primary challenge in this area is to develop an appropriate system that allows the various professionals to perform their specific functions within a compre-

hensive health care team and a comprehensive health care strategy.

With regard to the role of the physicians on the health care team, the ministry's direction will be to provide them with choices and alternatives in how they want to practice, how they want to be paid and, I should stress once again, to provide them with choices and alternatives in those areas; to encourage, through incentives, better distribution of physician services to underserved areas and groups in this province, and to encourage physicians to evaluate effectiveness of treatment provided.

In examining the role of nurses, the ministry's objective is to enhance the overall status of nurses in the health care delivery system, widen their range of responsibilities and improve their working conditions. Our surveys would indicate, very interestingly, that the most respected sector in all of society is the nursing profession, followed second by the doctors, but the nurses are actually generally held in the highest regard of all by the public. I think they must be commended for that.

The ministry will work to foster teamwork among all health professions to serve the best interests of the consumer through a number of objectives; to promote effective teamwork among health professionals; to promote accountability to the public; to foster a team of health professionals to effectively serve needs both inside institutions and outside them within the community; to enhance the professional status of all health professionals, and to enact new health professions legislation so as to better protect the public.

These are just a number of things that have been announced by the Ministry of Health. This document, of course, has received—I will show members once again—fairly wide circulation throughout the province. It is very important that all members of this Legislative Assembly from all parties read the document and understand the direction of the Ministry of Health.

I know there are others who wish to participate, so I may change my plans and not continue through the rest of the day and into tomorrow. I may, but I may not. I will decide that. I would like to discuss this government's commitment to education.

Hon Mr Wrye: That is worth a couple of hours.

Mr Mahoney: I would think it is worth a couple of hours, but it can probably be very succinctly put forward. Let's just talk about capital. Prior to 1985, in the last year of the

Conservative government, the entire commitment to capital in the entire province of Ontario was about \$72.7 million.

Mr Carrothers: That little. Shameful. How much?

Mr Mahoney: Ask me how much: \$72.7 million.

Hon Mr Wrye: You're spilling more than that.

Mr Mahoney: I am afraid we are spilling more than that. We have to do something about that with all this water around here.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member will address his remarks through the Speaker.

Mr Mahoney: Thank you, Mr Speaker, I will. They are just being a little disruptive. We will try to get things moving along.

Interjections.

Mr Mahoney: As I said yesterday, I appreciate the support of the seals and I particularly am proud to be one of them.

The commitment to education by this government has been quadrupled in fact in the capital area. We have seen our Minister of Education (Mr Ward) make announcements of \$900 million over three years for capital.

Is it enough? All you have to do is talk to someone in a growth region, to my colleague the member for Mississauga East (Mr Sola), who will know that all you have to do is talk to someone from the region of Peel and ask him, "Is that enough?" or from York or from Durham or from Halton, I say to the member for Halton North (Mr Elliot), and the answer is that it is obviously not enough.

Interjection.

Mr Mahoney: All right, I will mention the member for Halton Centre (Mrs Sullivan), the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour, as well.

Any member living in a growth community, I say to the member for Oakville South (Mr Carrothers)—I have to get through all of this here—will recognize that it is clearly not enough. But what can we do other than make additional commitments to the boards of education to fund their needs as quickly as we can to come up with new ways of building new schools?

I started talking the other day about my speech in Sarnia to the large urban section of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario last Thursday when I spoke about lot levies. I find it rather interesting that people would oppose lot

levies to be used as part of a fund to build schools.

As I mentioned yesterday, the lot levy revenue in my city—and it is something I am quite proud of, because as a member of council for almost 10 years I was one of the people involved in designing the lot levy policy, so I do not think it is anything we have to be ashamed of—our revenue from lot levies in 1988 in the region of Peel, city of Mississauga and Mississauga Hydro was over \$56 million.

Not one cent of that went towards schools. It went for hydro, it went for sewers, it went for infrastructure, it went for arenas, for swimming pools, for fire stations, for fire trucks, for all the things that are necessary in a fast-growing community.

Mr Pouliot: Nothing for the north.

Mr Mahoney: We are not going to give money from Mississauga to the north, with due respect, but if the member wants to charge lot levies, this new green paper will allow—

Mr R. F. Johnston: You don't believe in pooling?

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Pouliot: You ought to be ashamed.

Mr Mahoney: I am sure that Hazel McCallion would probably have some difficulty in supporting the member's municipality, but I am sure she would be delighted to share with him the lot levy policy that has been developed in the city of Mississauga and that has formed the basis of many policies around the entire province.

Growth must pay its own way. It is a statement that is in our official plan and it should be in every official plan in this province; indeed, it should be an official position of the government of Ontario. I am hopeful that if the green paper comes through the current deliberations, there will be a policy put in place that will allow municipalities to make the choice.

Time and time again we have demonstrated our desire to work with the local municipalities in understanding the needs that they have within their own communities, in understanding that someone from northern Ontario may have different needs and requirements than someone from southwestern Ontario in a municipality, whether it be Sunday shopping or whether it be lot levies.

We do not feel that we should be sitting here in some ivory tower in the city of Toronto, or indeed in the city of Mississauga, dictating to someone in Sault Ste Marie or Muskoka-Georgian Bay or Sudbury. We do not believe we

should be dictating to them whether or not they can open on Sunday or whether or not they are allowed to charge a lot levy, or indeed, if they do charge a lot levy, what it should go for.

Think about what we have been building in the high-growth communities for some time with the lot levies.

Would someone just give the member for Durham Centre (Mr Furlong) a nudge?

Mr Furlong: Give me another glass of water.

Mr Mahoney: He wants another glass of water.

We have been building the arenas and the swimming pools. In fact, I do not believe that in my municipality in the past 12 years there has been one cent of taxpayers' money go towards amenities such as swimming pools, arenas, soccer pitches, baseball diamonds, playground equipment for young children, passive parks, walkways. All of those kinds of things are paid for by the development that generates the requirement and the need for the facilities to be put in place.

1550

What could be more fair, what could be more understanding and more clear-cut? What the green paper is saying is that aside from putting in place a lot levy policy that would be adaptable to each municipality in whatever way it chose, we are now being so radical as a government, so outrageous as a government as to suggest the new development should help pay for the cost of a school.

It is absolutely revolutionary. The new development generates the children and the children walk around. Under ministry policy, there must be 50 per cent of the bodies walking the street before a school can be approved. That will not change, but at least the dollars will be available for a board once it has met the criteria and once it has negotiated the acquisition of the site.

Not only has this government shown four times the commitment to capital funding that the previous Progressive Conservative government showed in its last term in office and in its last year in office, in fact I should tell the members that my region alone last year received \$96 million and that is more than the \$72 million the entire province got the last time the Tories had a chance to pass out education dollars.

I do not know how we can make our commitment to education more clear, but we obviously cannot solve the problems overnight. We have obviously been saddled with a serious problem from the fathers of underfunding who have left us with a legacy we have to try to solve,

to find ways to do it. One of the ways to do it, aside from our commitment to the capital infrastructure in education of \$900 million over three years, is that we have come up with an innovative new concept of using developer lot levy funds to build schools.

Let me address the issue of affordable housing on that. The developers will argue we are driving up the price of a house. Do the members know that I have seen a house go up \$20,000 in a new subdivision in one weekend? In fact, I can remember a time when, by the time the last person in the lineup got into the sales trailer, the price had gone up \$5,000.

Was that because mysteriously somebody came along and put a lot levy on it, or was that because the price of the house increased? The cost of the house has very little to do with the price of the house. The price of the house will be determined by the marketplace. It will be determined by those three long-standing concepts in the real estate market: location, location, location.

The supply of and demand for the housing units will determine the price. The market will determine the price. Even though some of our colleagues on the left of the political spectrum, who are standing to my right, would rather have government interference in that marketplace to have us tax speculators who they do not think pay tax—if they understood, you must either live in the house for a period of time or own it and rent it out. If you flip it, you pay tax and it is a pretty heavy tax you pay.

This speculation tax is pure nonsense. They do not understand it and I do not expect them to understand it, because that is not exactly the area in which they have any expertise, even though they dress well and are very intelligent and well-educated. So it does not affect the cost of housing or affordable housing and I think they know that.

Let me get off the capital issue and talk a little bit about the select committee on education. I have had the pleasure and the privilege of being its vice-chairman, along with our chairman, the member for Eglinton (Ms Poole). I think the establishment of the select committee indicates this government's interest in hearing from the professionals in the education field about how we can improve the quality of education for our children.

I sat through seven weeks of hearings last summer and I listened to people, along with the member for Scarborough West (Mr R. F. Johnston) who is a very helpful member of that

committee, come in and talk about the issues of streaming and about the issues of special education and some of the really unfortunate things that have gone on in this province, particularly in the area of special education.

Having some personal experience within my own family in the learning disabled area, I have found that the treatment of young students in this area has been disgraceful and I think our government is committed to seeing changes, along with the boards. They should not be isolated. They should not be segregated. They must be mainstreamed and brought into the full system so they can take full advantage of this wonderful education system.

I would add, and I think the member for Scarborough West would agree, that if there is one conclusion we came to, aside from the fact that there may be a few problem areas within our system, we indeed do have an excellent education system. The old story of, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," and the concept of too often pulling up the roots to look at the shape of the tree were brought forward on numerous occasions.

But I think it became very clear to us that indeed we do have an excellent education system. It cannot be doubted in any way in this province that the Minister of Education is truly committed to improvements in that education system, as can be recognized right in the throne speech when we realize that they listened to the first report of the select committee by working towards the elimination of streaming in grade 9 and pushing it forward to grade 10.

Think about a youngster who would be 13 years old in grade 8 sitting down to make a decision about what level of education he wants to take in high school, trying to determine where he wants to go in his future, because if he makes the wrong decision it could inhibit his ability to enter the university program or the college program. When they have to make that decision, particularly in the case of a first child where the parents may not have that much experience with the education system, I have maintained all along, and did so in the select committee hearings, that streaming out of grade 8 into grade 9 is way too early.

They are too young to make those decisions, and once they make them, under the present system it is virtually irrevocable. They will tell you it is not, but the reality is that the difficulties of moving from a basic level to an advanced level in our secondary system is an extremely difficult move for a young person to make.

I would like to conclude my comments by generally saying that I believe—

Mr Pouliot: Oh no.

Mr Mahoney: I will not if you do not want me to. I am happy, but I think the member for Scarborough West is next and I am always delighted to hear his rather lucid, intelligent, well-thought-out comments, even though I do not agree with most of them. But they are entertaining and well-thought-out.

In closing, I would like to say that I was just delighted when I finally saw the throne speech, because I think too often governments think they have to use a million words when perhaps a thousand will do. I guess politicians can be accused of the same thing. Sometimes we feel we have to write volumes to be credible.

In reality, what we have done is identify six major areas in this throne speech that I believe reach out to all the various ministries and address the various problems, be they in the area of providing leadership to build on our economic strengths; in the area of a relevant education system; in the area of transforming welfare cheques into paycheques and creating incentive in our welfare system; in the area of a safe and secure society; in the area of accessibility to our health care system and a better understanding of how we can deliver a more effective, more affordable system of health care; and also in the area of a safe, clean environment.

I would say finally, in closing, that I do not think anyone can argue with the fact that this government has had better leadership out of the Honourable James Bradley and the Ministry of the Environment than any Minister of the Environment in the history of this province, or at least in recent memory.

He is a man who is clearly the Minister of the Environment. He is not the minister of special interest groups, he is not the minister of garbage. He is the Minister of the Environment and his interests and concerns, along with those of his parliamentary assistant, my friend Mr McClelland—Mr Bradley and Carman have shown a dedication to the environment that Ontarians can indeed be proud of.

1600

The Deputy Speaker: May I remind the member that we should refer to members only by their titles and not by their names.

Mr Mahoney: Thank you very much. If I could remember the riding, I would be delighted to do that. I was referring to the minister, but in any event, thank you, Mr Speaker.

In closing, I think this government has outlined a very dynamic agenda, a program of true Liberal reform, a program that will see us move towards the turn of the century with economic strength and leadership and dynamic attitudes through our ministry, through the leadership of the Premier and his cabinet and through the support—I wish the member for Oshawa (Mr Breaugh) was here, because when he speaks he constantly waves his papers around and refers to “those Liberal backbenchers over there.” I want to tell the members opposite that I have never been associated with a stronger group of men and women who are completely dedicated to providing leadership in this province through the philosophies of our great Liberal Party and the philosophies of the Premier.

The fact is there are 94 of us, and we have been here since September 1987 and there has not been one murder. I think that proves that we are getting along.

Interjection.

Mr Mahoney: Well, you have to do a little bit of that. The member for Brampton North (Mr McClelland) knows that.

It also shows the leadership we are getting and that we are really pulling together, because right here in our throne speech—there are six items within this document that show the agenda for this government and the future for this province.

Le Vice-Président : Est-ce qu'il y a des questions et commentaires au sujet du discours du député?

M. Pouliot : C'est toujours un plaisir d'écouter, malgré que ce soit seulement de temps à autre, from time to time, the words of our good friend and I think humour does become him. It is perhaps his forte, for substance is not something the member chooses to dwell with, but it is quite understandable when we talk about the subject matter to be addressed, namely, the speech from the throne: It had this unique quality about it, that it was short. I wish to commend the member, because words will do that: You can go at some length and omit what should be mentioned in terms of fairness.

This party I belong to—I say this without any bias or prejudice, of course—represents a social conscience. It can tell members about the great free enterpriser Brascan: \$174 million in 1987, no taxes; Xerox: \$64 million profit, no taxes; Hees International: \$151 million, no taxes. A family of two with an income—I am talking here in terms of family income—of \$29,000: \$6,500 in taxes per annum.

I do not have to ask members whether this is fair. This is what it is all about, and I hope the budget that will be tabled by the Treasurer will address what is really the focus, what is really fairness in our society.

Le Vice-Président : Désolé, le temps est écoulé. Are there other questions and comments? If not, does the member wish to respond?

Mr Mahoney: Very briefly, just to thank the honourable gentleman for his, I think, compliment. I will have to read Hansard to find out if indeed there was any substance to it, but I felt a sense of warmth coming across.

I also find it interesting how that party tends to want to claim to be the party of social justice, to be the only party that cares. Let me tell the member that neither he nor his party has a monopoly on caring. Just because our party shows the leadership to work within the industrial sector and the business community in creating an atmosphere—if he had been here yesterday, he would have heard about the creation of 127,000 new small businesses within this province, and that translates into 30,000 new jobs, perhaps to help those individuals he is referring to.

Anybody, any time, can pull out an individual example and wave it in the air as being a terrible tragedy, "It's all the government's fault." But in reality it is our responsibility as a government to show leadership. It is extremely easy to criticize when they know they will never be the government. I think it is very clear to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr B. Rae) and the members of the opposition party that never will they have the responsibility of carrying the mantle of power. Never will they have the responsibility of making a decision. I think they are well aware of that, so it is easy for them to draw up individual examples.

In the meantime, we must work on creating within this province an atmosphere of economic prosperity and managing that economic prosperity. I suggest that in the last four years this province has increased tremendously in those areas and that we are helping to manage the economy in a very positive way.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Without doubt, there are many problems inherent in having a 94-member caucus. I would not understand them and the nuances that go with them, but one of them must be that when your own—let's start differently.

It is hard to get on the agenda here as a backbencher for the Liberals these days, is it not? It is hard to get a question on in question period. It is hard to get a speech on, especially when one

of their own members is filibustering. That is difficult.

It is bad enough when one of us on the other side can be seen to be trying to take away the time of individual members of the Liberal back bench and rump in the House, but when one of their own members calls them seals and then says he is happy to be a seal as well, one really has to say that perhaps the lack of physical violence and murder that has been alleged by the member—perhaps those days are going to end shortly. If I were to predict a by-election caused by such an effect, Mississauga West would be the probable area where we would see it take place.

It is a pent-up frustration, I understand, when you do not get the chance to express yourself, so that a member like the member for Mississauga West (Mr Mahoney) wants to go on at some length and, as the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr Pouliot) has said, with a certain rapidity, if that is a word—if not, it is now, and that will give the translators a lot of trouble—with a lack of substance that is a little disconcerting, but it has never bothered most of us as we have risen from our seats over time. Since I have been here 10 years with those same attributes, I should say it does not guarantee that he will not be back, unfortunately.

Hon Mr Conway: Is it 10 years?

Mr R. F. Johnston: Yes, indeed, 5 April 1979 and counting.

Hon Mr Conway: Colin Isaacs is long gone.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Yes, indeed.

Shall we turn instead to the throne speech? I have prepared my remarks after great consultation with the Sergeant at Arms, who is so seldom mentioned now by members as they rise to talk about the throne speech, and of course I have conferred continually with members of the table here, but not as much as I have with Hansard correctors who have saved me from many a gaffe over the years.

But principally I base my remarks today, because they are on education, on information given to me by the pages, who although they have been here only a few short days, have already summed up just how this place operates, I think, and have been of great assistance to me.

One of the things I think they agree with me about is that the government chose a very interesting tactic in terms of a throne speech. Perhaps members opposite will disagree, but there are some of us, and even some members of the media who are not known to be necessarily New Democrats, who thought perhaps the government was in some disarray at the end of

the last session. As it dragged on interminably, much like the last speech we just heard, with little effect and little action in those last few weeks, people started to say: "Maybe this government has no Liberal reform agenda. Maybe the only ideas they had were those that came out of the accord and everything else is pretty much without substance."

1610

What did the Liberal government try to do? They looked back at how they had been so successful in the last election in promoting the idea of being Liberal reformers. They picked at that time, as members may recall in that election, a couple of issues to focus on as symbols of reformism. One of the key areas was education, as the past Minister of Education, now government House leader, will well know.

During that election, to the surprise of everyone, including probably the Deputy Minister of Education, several announcements were made which had not exactly been thought out but were good symbols of reform. If you look at education and all the conflicting viewpoints that are out there about education, there are some few numbers of things which most people agree on, and one of them is that reduced class size is a good thing. As a result, the government announced it was going to reduce class sizes in two grades of the primary division in the next year and it was going to spend \$300 million—may I round out the \$297-million promise to \$300 million? That would not seem to be too excessive—for the first year of government.

Oh, yes, 11 August, the quote is specific. I would be glad to remind the member for Renfrew North (Mr Conway) that on 6 August when the announcement was made it was not clear as to whether this was going to be in the first year, but the Premier (Mr Peterson) cleared that up four days later and specifically said "\$297 million in the first year of our mandate."

Many people thought: "This is progressive. This is dynamic. This is reform." How surprised they were when in fact the amount of money that went into, for instance, reduction of class size was not \$197 million as had been promised but was \$22 million for that first year. Now we are told just recently by the Minister of Education (Mr Ward) that perhaps by 1990 the figure will have reached that full \$197 million that had been promised—three years later.

Hon Mr Conway: You just said \$297 million, then you said \$197 million.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Let me go back. I will not be badgered. I will instead go back and find the

specific figure for the member who is not clear about it either.

Hon Mr Conway: I might just make the point that sometimes people can get confused.

Mr R. F. Johnston: More than confused, I am sure.

Hon Mr Conway: That was the election where you at least proclaimed yourself a socialist.

Mr R. F. Johnston: I am a socialist and have been a socialist and will continue to be a socialist.

It is \$170 million a year as announced on 6 August by the government of Ontario leader at that time, the member for London Centre (Mr Peterson).

But the total figure for the entire package was \$297 million. It included other items, which I am glad the member raised because none of them has been fully funded since that time either, and I know the government House leader would want me to make sure that the people of Ontario knew it was not just the class-size promise that the Liberals reneged on but it was in fact a whole series of other things as well.

For instance, they provided about one third of the money for increasing access to computers. Computer software was divided by a substantial amount. The intermediate science figures that were provided were about half of what was promised. The new textbooks announcements were again just a tiny fraction of what had been promised and announced as specifically going to be paid for in that year 1987, which we will all remember so fondly as the year of the great Liberal majority and Liberal reformism. This was just one of the things that started to fall apart for the Liberal government.

We also know about the automobile insurance fiasco and how that looked, like that specific promise, about a very special plan the Premier had for us in terms of how he was going to reduce auto insurance rates, somehow fell apart. In fact the legislation that the Liberals have now brought forward to not implement what they said they were going to implement is still not even workable and we are going to have to get new legislation soon, I gather, to make it even possible to roll back the figures to 7.6 per cent—

Mr D. S. Cooke: By 1 June.

Mr R. F. Johnston: —by 1 June. This kind of competence that just emanated from the government over this last little while was in fact starting to really erode the notion that its members were anything but new Tories. I think if members listened to the speech today by the member for

Mississauga West, I would have to say that I have heard the same kind of language from Tories since I was elected here, a defensive attack back on people who attack their lack of progressivity.

That we do not have the sole hold on the conscience of Ontario is a Frank Drea line, and government members should be very happy to associate themselves with Frank Drea, who used to throw that to me on a continual basis when I told him about how he was not dealing with social assistance programs as he should be. To listen to the defensive language of the member for Mississauga West today is just to bring back that kind of notion that all is well, a very smug, Toryish kind of attitude that I do not think behoves the notion of Liberal reform.

So what did the government have to do? I will tell members what the government had to do. It had to come up with new symbols of reform to show now that, "We are again the reformers." They came out, not with the usual long shopping list of vagaries that one finds in a throne speech, and for that we were all pleased—

Mr D. S. Cooke: Now a short list of vagaries.

Mr R. F. Johnston: It was good that it was short, but as my House leader says, it was a short list of vagaries. Some of them looked more precise than they are. Unfortunately, the government has rushed into explaining a couple of its major premises and new symbols of reform afterwards, and they have fallen apart like a terrible little house of cards. Let's deal with them.

Education has again been chosen as one of the great symbols of Liberal reform. What do we have? We have a government that comes forward and in the context of the throne speech tells us it is going to increase the quality of education by allowing children to come in at four years of age, is going to encourage that, so that all parents in the province can have their children in junior kindergarten, if they so choose, because this will be good for the quality of education. It also came through with another major promise on destreaming. I will come back to that one, but let's first deal with the kindergarten stuff, because this sounded very like the kind of announcement that had been made on class size.

It sounded so simplistic and so avoiding of all the realities that are out there in terms of the costs to local boards, especially the notion that full-day senior kindergarten was now going to be proposed province-wide, except the government would not put in money where space was a problem, which I thought was an interesting point. But the expectation put upon parents that

they would now be able to get their kids into senior kindergarten across the province is part of this throne speech. The symbol is out there, that this will be available to people, even though it defies the reality of what is possible for boards in Ontario today.

But the problem of the government was even worse than just sort of not thinking about the problems of making a major change in policy of this sort. They were as follows: all of a sudden, the Premier started talking about this as a child care policy. I heard this from his press conference about the throne speech and I thought: "This does not jibe. This is supposed to be quality of education. This is not child care, this is not custodial care we are talking about." It was not until later that the penny dropped: the government was looking for a cheap way to expand day care spaces.

I said: "How can they do this? I do not understand." Under the Canada assistance plan, day care moneys passed through from the federal government are all geared on a welfare basis. The education system is a universal system and does not operate that way. How are they going to do this? I could not figure it out until the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) confirmed it for me after the unfortunate leak in Ottawa of the reality of the Wilson budget, which we all hate. I am sure we can all say that with equanimity here. We discovered that in point of fact he had been planning to pay for this new quality education program through the new proposed federal child care plan that was being proposed by the Tories before the last election.

This is amazing, from two perspectives. One is he actually thought that the child care plan was going to survive the budget and did not understand that there was going to be a quid pro quo for the loss of the subs, and that was that child care was going down the tubes as well in that budget. Putting that aside, the very idea that this government would start to mix child care and education policy and foist a lot of extra costs on to the taxpayer and the education system locally is, in my view, just a wrongheaded kind of concept.

1620

The government really does have to make up its mind. Does it want day care as a whole in the education system or does it want an enhanced junior kindergarten system and a full-day senior kindergarten system for educational, pedagogical reasons? If it is saying that it is going to slip child care into the education system, then I suppose it had better clear up with the Minister of

Community and Social Services (Mr Sweeney) and the Minister of Education who is going to have responsibility for this, because the mess that is out there now, as we expand day care into the education system without knowing who is in charge of it, is causing us all sorts of difficult problems.

But now, of course, the reality has hit, the other shoe has dropped; and that is that Wilson's money—sorry, the federal Minister of Finance's money—is not going to be forthcoming and the government's expectations of junior kindergarten everywhere and of increases in senior kindergarten across the province in the next few years are going to have to be paid for out of this Treasury. I suggest to the government that if it is now going to hoist on Ontario a large increase in taxes to bring in a plan which is wrongly thought out in terms of the rationale behind it, I think it has some serious problems.

Members of the select committee—and there are only three of us in the room at the moment, but there are others in and out—will understand that when we talked about the problem of early identification of problems for kids, which was alluded to in the throne speech as one of the reasons for expanding junior kindergarten, when we talked about the difficulties some children in the system had in adapting earlier on, the problem was not having a flexible entry time. Right?

We had kids who had to come into the system based on their birthday. Therefore, as they enter in September—all kids have to enter in September—some kids would naturally have a developmental delay, because they are younger, by as much as six months. Those children, because they were so young, would have an amazing amount of catch-up to do, would often get a very negative view of the education system to start off with and, with ratios of 25 to one, at least in junior kindergartens and most places around the province, were not getting the kind of identification assistance that was required. So what people talked to us about was:

"Deal somehow with that question of when you enter. Don't just drop it down a year and exacerbate the problems, because the differences in age proportionately will be even that much more severe for those kids. Talk about maybe moving to a semestered system at the entry point so that children can enter in January and you will not have the kind of developmental delays we now see."

This is what we were talking about. We were not talking in the committee about a total

expansion of junior kindergarten as a notion that pedagogically was better than children being in day care. I think it is important to remember children in day care today who are four years of age have an eight-to-one ratio with their instructor. In a stimulating early childhood education environment, like a good day care can be, with that kind of a ratio there can be early identification of problems, there can be real understanding of the development of cognitive skills that children have at that stage. I would suggest to members it can be done better in some instances than doing it in JK when you have got 25 to one.

We come to the next point, which is this destreaming thing. I was at a conference this morning in Scarborough talking about transition, the transition in that case from grades 7 and 8 into high school, how traumatic that is for a lot of kids in the system and how in fact, as Radwanski pointed out in his report, the grade 9 transition problem was identified by more dropouts than any other issue as the serious reason why they left.

I was talking to them today. I said, "It's fascinating that we as a committee even concentrated so much on that transition period in the intermediate section and weren't looking back at that transition period that comes much earlier." Think of what it is like for a child nowadays in our society who moves from the home—the average age might be two or two and a half now to go into kindergarten, something like that—into a circumstance where they have a child care arrangement of some sort or other, then moves from that to a 25 to 1 ratio in junior kindergarten with no support systems.

There is no concept in our educational system at this moment for counsellors at that early level. We talk about guidance counselling in high schools; as a select committee, we talked a lot about enhancing the role of guidance counsellors in grades 7 and 8. But we have no concept at this point of having people who are really well trained in identifying problems of kids in their development in those early stages and we have very large class sizes.

The thing that struck me about that first announcement—going back again to the election, which the government is now trying to get back to, this notion of symbols that are important to it—was that the government said it was going to reduce class sizes in grades 1 and 2. I want the members to think about that. We divide up our education system, supposedly rationally, between divisions in our system at the moment because of what we know about childhood

development. That is the essential reason for it, and that is a good pedagogical reason for having divisions, if you know about doing it on the basis of the development of the child.

Instead, for political reasons—not pedagogical reasons, but the push of an election, the demand to come up with a symbol—the government came through with the idea of reducing grades 1 and 2. What about kindergarten and what about grade 3? If you really want to look at our system in an honest kind of way and say that class size should be reduced, then my view would be that you start in kindergarten, put in extra resources in kindergarten, because that is the transition period, that is the tough time for kids entering the system, in terms of their cognitive development; then you do it in grades 1, 2 and 3, and you do it for the division.

What we have done instead is something which, as I say, makes very little sense to our organizational structure. What do we have in this budget—I am sorry. We will see it in the budget as well, but what do we have in this throne speech? We have the government suggesting that we should be destreaming grade 9, the pilot projects, by 1992. It is one of those really powerful symbols. You know: Lead with all your might and take two steps backwards and say, “We’ll think about this in the morning and come back to you.”

What bothered me about this, again, is that the reality of our intermediate division and the problems with it when it is divided between two panels, between the high school panel and the elementary panel, were being ignored by the government. The select committee, an all-party committee, dealt with this at length. What we decided was that destreaming to grade 9 would be a good idea in terms of slowing down the career choice, but it should not be done out of context with a number of other major changes which would make sure that there was some sort of continuum within the intermediate section. We suggested a range of things.

We suggested that if you were going to do that, you would have to reduce the class size at the secondary level where you did this. Why? Because teachers now at the secondary level, perhaps dealing with a class of 30 students, are used to dealing with them in a fairly homogeneous fashion; that is to say, they are dealing with basic-level kids or they are dealing with general-level kids or they are dealing with advanced-level kids. If you move to a heterogeneous class in which you have 30 kids, some of whom are basic level, some of whom are general level, some of

whom are advanced level and some of whom have learning disabilities or are special-education kids for other reasons, the teachers will not be able to cope with it. It is destined to fail.

We also said that you have to retrain these teachers, because they do not know how to deal with a heterogeneous class. They have not had the kind of training that a lot of our elementary panel teachers have in dealing with co-operative education models and breaking the class down into various kinds of groups and getting them all to work together and that kind of thing. That does not happen as much at the secondary level. The training is not there for it. We said that was an important component that should be included.

We also said that a vital thing is to increase the status of counsellors and guidance counsellors in the elementary panel. At present, we have a situation in the province where a given school might have adequate counselling given in an elementary school and the next neighbouring one may not even have a counsellor in it. You may have a counsellor from the feeder school who has an excellent relationship to the high school guidance counsellor, whom the children will go to as they go on to the secondary panel. In the next school, they may not have that relationship. There is no uniformity around Ontario; there is no continuity.

1630

I do not know if members remember back to their days of making the switch to grade 9. That is why I was talking with some of the pages about this; some of them have to worry about this in the not-too-distant future. I remember what it was like for me. Grade 8 was the high point of my academic career. I think I need to confess that at this point. In grades 6 and 7, Norman Walls came first and I came second. We were in Salem Public School, a three-room public school in southern Ontario, and darn it, Norman would beat me every time.

My father was very competitive and I am convinced paid his family to leave town in grade 8, and I became the valedictorian in that year. But the next year we moved to Peterborough and I went to a city high school, busing in an hour and a half each morning.

The transition was very tough and very hard to deal with. I knew nobody in the community. I knew nobody in the school. For a lot of students, that is not much different than it is for a student within an elementary school going into a high school. They do not know the teachers and they are not used to dealing with as many teachers as they come across. So we suggested there should

be a core curriculum and a home room kind of concept developed in grade 9.

The government accepted that in the throne speech, but what it did not accept was the idea that we should develop a model where counsellors could follow a child from grade 7 right through to grade 10, that the boards of education should start to look at that and start to deal with the teachers' federations about how that could be accommodated.

We also talked about the idea of mentoring; that is to say, that a home room teacher might stay with a class from grades 7, 8, 9 and 10 and cross panels and that those kinds of things really needed to be looked at if you were going to move into destreaming in a sensible way.

Again, I would point out that even I was a minority on the committee when I started to talk about the notion of divisions. If you are going to have an intermediate division, what sense does it make to have this end at grade 9 rather than grade 10? It does not make sense to me, if you accept that this is a specific group that needs to be organized in this fashion, that you would end destreaming in grade 9.

My sense of what has happened with this announcement, when I look at the two major educational planks, is that two easy symbols were put up. One was the response to Radwanski, destreaming, which is going to be done in a way that I think dooms it to failure even as pilot projects. Therefore, we will go back to the status quo and never really look at whether or not the system could have been appropriately destreamed.

The other is kindergarten for day care, and now I think that is in disrepute, for many reasons, and I think people should know this. The Toronto Board of Education which has senior kindergarten estimates the cost of moving to full-day senior kindergarten throughout its system—they think that expectation now is going to be laid out there for people—is going to cost millions of dollars even for a board that has moved in that direction. The Peel Board of Education indicated to me that it thought the cost would be \$77.5 million to move to it.

I say the expectation that has been raised and the lack of bucks which are going to be moved on are really unjust. A point was made by people from the York region to me, that one out of five of their elementary schools had so many portables that there was no space to put new portables on.

They asked me: "What are we supposed to do as a board now that junior kindergarten is going

to be accepted as the norm across the province of Ontario? Are we going to tell our electors that we will hold JK classes in the south end, the developed end of our jurisdiction, but not in the developing end where all the full schools are? Are we going to live with that political reality? No, obviously we can't do that. Are we going to tell parents that in order to get to those schools, they're going to have to bus four-year-olds? Clearly, busing four-year-olds is not anything we would accept as sound educational practice in Ontario."

"So what are we going to do?" they asked. There is only one option for us in those kinds of schools; that is, we will take the grade 7s and grade 8s and shift them to other schools, away from their community. We will bus them now. Then we will have to renovate their classrooms to make sure they have the kinds of facilities we need for junior kindergarten, because as members may know, it is everything from eensie, little, teeny toilets to other kinds of facilities that are required. It is a major job and a major cost.

I just say that the thinking on this has really not been worked out very well. The anger out there in the community at the way the government has unilaterally thrown out this kind of notion, because it needed symbols to refurbish its tarnished image, is going to cause the government an awful lot of problems.

There are two matters that were not in the throne speech which will be in the budget, one would presume. They come down to capital funding questions of lot levies and pooling. The member for Mississauga West went on about, "How can anybody be against lot levies?" I think there are lots of ways in which you could be against a lot levy. If you are in an existing area that has no major room for growth, and lot levies are now going to be the answer to construction or renovation of local schools, then you are out of luck because you are not going to get those bucks.

Mr D. S. Cooke: The Speaker understands that.

Mr Pouliot: The Speaker agrees with us.

Mr R. F. Johnston: I think the Acting Speaker would possibly understand that, coming from the riding of Windsor-Walkerville.

If you are in another area where you have amazing growth, the kind of money you are going to get from lot levies is not going to touch your problems. The government did a very nasty thing just before the throne speech. In announcing its capital grants, much lauded by the member for Mississauga West, and I am sure

concurrent in by all the members opposite, it reduced the percentage of bucks that are coming from the province from 75 per cent to 60 per cent. This was in effect the signal that lot levies are coming.

What this essentially means is that not only is that local taxpayer going to get hit for the normal amount of construction costs that he had in the past, but now an even higher percentage will be expected because of the lot levy phenomenon. Where you have the possibility of having great growth, perhaps you will get that levy in, but where it is not so exponential in its growth, you are going to see the problem of boards having to go to their taxpayers for more and more money to get the schools, while the expectation for those schools has been generated by this government saying the lot levy is going to be the solution.

The other that this government is about to announce is pooling of commercial and industrial assessments between the separate and public boards. It is strange but this was not announced in the throne speech, as if this, the single most important issue in education—that is, the adequate funding of education—was not important enough to even mention in the throne speech. It said to me that either the Minister of Education has not won the battle on this one yet, or they really want to downplay this and as a government want to wait a while for this to come through.

I want to hear that the solution is—Mr Speaker, just for your information, because this will be of interest to you—that there will be a local, municipality-based, if I can put it that way, pooling of assessments.

The net effect on most of the public boards will be a loss of approximately three per cent. The options, if they went farther abroad than that, to larger regional kinds of pooling, would mean there would be a 15 per cent loss to public boards. That is just going to be too much of an insult to public educators at this stage, who have taken it really very much on the chin since Bill 30. That has certainly been their attitude about it. If you went province-wide, you would be talking about a shift of as much as 30 per cent.

As I hear it, the option is going to be for local pooling and it is going to be a three per cent difference. The way the government is going to make this acceptable is by finally raising the ceilings for the grants that are passed on to the boards. The ceilings that this government has said are adequate—it has been saying boards are being irresponsible because they are having to spend substantially more than that these days—are now going to be raised so that the public

boards will get back approximately what they are losing in the assessment. The Catholic boards will say, "Look, that localized pooling isn't enough; it's not going to give us the amount of money we need," and they will also get their ceilings raised so that the total amount will keep everybody quiet for now.

What it will not do is deal with the issue of just what has happened to funding in general in the province in this last little while. We are now down to 42 per cent of the operating costs of our system of education being assumed by the province.

1640

Mr D. S. Cooke: But they add teachers' superannuation.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Yes, my House leader reminds me about superannuation, but let me come to another point first, if I might.

If one looks back to 1973, provincial support at that time was 60 per cent; it has been as high as 61 per cent, in 1975. Since this government has come to power, provincial support has been dropping year by year and is now down to 42 per cent, even though this government promised in the 1985 election and reiterated in 1987 that it was in favour of assuming 60 per cent of the costs.

Mr Pouliot: People are being misled.

Mr R. F. Johnston: The government has changed its language, I say to the member for Lake Nipigon. It has now said that it is of the approved costs; this is where we come into this gamesmanship around the notion of ceilings.

Then there is the latest wrinkle my House leader refers to; that is, the government now saying that somehow its costs in terms of the teachers' pension plan can be rolled into these figures to explain that it is actually paying 60 per cent. They have been talking with Conrad Black too long. They have been following the Dominion Stores story, perhaps, on who pensions belong to, and Mr Black's version of that. Now they seem to believe the public of Ontario is going to accept that fact.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Which Tory Minister of Education used to say that?

Mr R. F. Johnston: As I recall, and I am sure the present House leader for the government and the past critic for Education during the days of Bette Stephenson—no, he was just always there in committee harassing her. That is right. But he will remember that it was Bette Stephenson who used to talk in these terms and be chastised by

those of us in the opposition, including the odd Liberal, and I say that advisedly.

Hon Mr Conway: You're calling Bradley odd? I'll tell him.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Exactly; I think the member can pass that along.

Even the Premier, as I recall, maybe had a word or two to say about how nefarious that kind of inclusion in the 60 per cent figure really was.

I would just say that what the government has not done and does not have in its plan around pooling is the real change about the adequacy of funding, the question that is out there these days, "Who should pay?" Should it be the person who happens to own a home in Ontario, whether that is a senior on a fixed income or a very wealthy person, or should it be a progressive tax paid for out of the provincial budget? Who should be paying for education?

When this government now says that 42.7 per cent is appropriate to come from the provincial share, I say something has gone wrong. I look forward to the public hearings this fall. I look forward to those hearings about who should pay when we discuss the pooling solution this government has not put into its throne speech, which we all hear is soon coming down the pipes.

Hon Mr Conway: I hope your hearing is better than your analysis.

Mr R. F. Johnston: I think it is important these quips be put on the record. I know it is always difficult for Hansard to catch them all when the member opposite decides he is going to pay attention to my speech and not to his colleague's, but I think it is important that my analysis—

Hon Mr Conway: I am paying a great deal of attention. Is it your view that 60 per cent is an open-ended total expenditure?

Mr R. F. Johnston: I think the rhetorical question being asked now by the minister, who clearly wants the floor and is unwilling to wait his turn or perhaps to take as much time as the member for Mississauga West did in terms of taking time from members opposite, is to try to provoke me into saying, "Just what was your position prior to 1987 when you used to talk about this?"

Hon Mr Conway: I would just like to get your view on specific expenditure and taxation—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr M. C. Ray): Order, please. Let us not turn this into a private conversation.

Mr R. F. Johnston: You are right, Mr Speaker. It is strange, though, you must agree, that the House leader would have so quickly forgotten what the role of opposition is. The role of the opposition is to call a government to account, because as government it has the tools to take action and it is the government which has slipped. That is why it is so busy and desperate, reaching for these other symbols that are crumbling two or three days after the throne speech.

Hon Mr Conway: It sounds like a paid opposition to me.

Mr R. F. Johnston: We are paid, but underpaid, as members will know by my resolution, Mr Speaker.

Let me come to a couple of other issues. The first is on the quality-of-education issue. In these last couple of months we have had two major studies. One was an international study of 12 jurisdictions looking at the levels in maths and science of 13-year-olds in the province, and the other was a recent study of students at the senior high school level around chemistry and physics.

Two things need to be said. The first is that in reading both studies, one can say there is adequacy in terms of the assimilation of fact and that our English-speaking students in the province have done better in that area than our francophone students. But when one looks at the analysis of how the young students in the province, in these two studies, are using the tools they have been given by the teachers in terms of critical analysis and use of the information they have been given, we have done dismally.

I would just remind members that the English-speaking students in this province ranked about halfway in the international study, and the francophone students ranked last or second to last in these jurisdictions.

The Minister of Education used a euphemism in his first announcement about the international study, which said something about the francophone students not doing as well as their English colleagues.

In the second study, in which francophone children—senior students at this stage—again did very badly, in terms of critical skills developed around chemistry and physics, the government basically tried to deep-six that report as well. It did not include any of the background information in its press release, in which there were comments that indicated what the problem was, that the teachers they had were not appropriately trained and that the kind of resource materials

needed to teach those subjects in French were not available in the province.

In neither case has the Minister of Education spoken with any emotion at all in this House about what should be done about this. Most of us in this House happen to be anglophones. I suggest that if the roles were reversed and one was now a francophone parent in Ontario learning that his children were being failed by the system so dramatically in 1989, as they have been for 50 years in this province, he would expect of a government some kind of statement of action. He would expect, in a throne speech, some kind of statement that there was going to be an investigation and that there was a specific plan to be implemented to help the francophone community improve its scores. This province is either for all of us, or I would suggest, it is for none of us.

The Premier's Council says the future is science and math. It cannot be a future that is available just to anglophone students in this province. The government, with two serious reports, twice ducks dealing with this straight on. It says to francophone parents in Ontario: "We are going to do something on this. We are going to throw our resources behind it. We think this is as important as some of the other educational matters we have raised in this throne speech," which turns out to be puffery.

I just say that this is not a Liberal reform government, when it can just sit back and let this kind of thing take place.

1650

Mr Pouliot: Puffery?

Mr R. F. Johnston: Puffery.

L'hon. M. Fontaine: Il faut lire le discours du trône.

M. Pouliot: Il n'y a rien là.

M. R. F. Johnston: Il n'y a rien là. Il n'y a rien dans le discours du trône. Je demande au ministre: O— ce problème est-il énuméré dans le discours du trône? Il n'est pas là.

M. Pouliot: C'est une déclaration de platitudes.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Another item which is not addressed in terms of education in this throne speech is the teacher shortage. This government again wishes to look at this issue with its head in the sand to say that there is no specific problem at the moment.

But we now have identified the fact that this year alone we are going to have 1,500 to 2,000 fewer teachers than we need; that in some parts of the province there will not be a supply teacher

who is capable of teaching mathematics; that there will not be a supply teacher who is capable of teaching French; that we have a system which is absolutely unco-ordinated between the needs of the school board and who is going into the faculties of education to come out into the system the next year.

It is incredible to me that we would know, from boards of education across the province, that we need hundreds of technical teachers, even though those programs are in some difficulty in the province, and yet we have a known deficit this year in the schools of education of—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. There are a number of private conversations here that are making it difficult to hear the member.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Mr Speaker, I would not presume to demand of the ministers and others that they listen to the speech. I know from time to time my attention wavers in the House as well. I appreciate your kindness in trying to protect my interests.

I would just say, though, that this whole area is mind-bogglingly out of control. We know that the number of graduates this year will be 4,435 if they all graduate and are all suitable candidates to be teachers in a board. That, of course, is unlikely. We also now know that there will be at least that many retirements this year, and perhaps even more.

The overall deficit over the next few years could be as many as 1,500 to 2,000 per year. The government of Ontario has added 385 new positions this year to the colleges that teach education at this point in Ontario. This is an acceptance of the deficit. This is an acceptance of the inappropriate allocation of the people who go into the colleges in the first place.

Mr Speaker, did you know that at least half of the people who applied to colleges last year did not even get in; that there were as many as 12,000 people applying to get into colleges last year to become teachers, yet our capacity was only 4,435? You may say that some of those people were not appropriately qualified. I have some letters here, which I will not read into the record at this point but at some point in this House I am going to do so, of people who are eminently qualified to go to these schools of education who are needed in specific areas of deficit at this point and who cannot get in at this stage.

I have people who are writing to me who have been doing practice teaching, supply teaching and upgrading their courses in boards for five to 10 years and whose academic qualifications do

not happen to be 85 per cent and over when they were in the college system in the old days, but whose practical experience and letters of reference from boards are exemplary. Yet they have not been accepted into the schools of education when we know we have the deficit that we have now.

This is not the time to go into enormous detail about the problems that are there. I have done that in the past and will continue to do so in places like estimates where one can ferret out more information than one is able to deal with in a response to a throne speech. But why, if this government really means it is going to do anything on education, was there nothing in here about the nature of the education of our teachers and the shortage of those teachers? If people do not understand that a system makes it or breaks it on the quality of its teachers, I think they misunderstand what education is all about.

Just in passing, I wonder why the government has not introduced in this throne speech some kind of comment about the Bill 82 revisions. For several years now we have been waiting to see what is going to happen with special-education legislation in the province. All the rumours are that finally this spring, after years of it being indicated that it was coming, it is in fact going to come down the pike. If the government is going to do anything in terms of dealing with the philosophy of integration, why was that not in fact integrated into the throne speech?

We have the situation in this province at the moment where neighbouring boards and coterminous boards in the two different systems have absolutely opposite policies around integrating or segregating students with learning disabilities and other kinds of problems. We have the incredible situation where people are changing their religious affiliation, are actually joining the Catholic church, not for reasons that one would come to in terms of a normal philosophical quest for some answers but because they want to get their kids mainstreamed and the only board in a region around them that actually mainstreams disabled children is the Catholic board in their case.

If we want to talk about education and looking forward to the future of our children—and there is this wonderful line at the end of this speech, « Nous voulons qu'en envisageant l'avenir nos enfants aient confiance en leurs aptitudes, soient fiers de leur diversité et n'éprouvent aucune inquiétude quant à leur qualité de vie »—and if we mean that we want that kind of equality and that kind of sense of power that children will have

about their future, then we cannot say that the notion of whether those children are going to continue to be segregated or will be integrated in the mainstream should be left out of a throne speech.

I am now of great concern that all we are going to see is some tinkering with the regulations around Bill 82 and we are not going to see that principle joined, much as we have seen with heritage languages. Merely the Scarborough amendment has been brought in so that that recalcitrant board will finally accept what all the other boards of the province have accepted, much to my personal concern and shame over the years. But we are not dealing with what the substance of language education should be all about and I will save that for another speech on the subject, because I will have the occasion this spring.

Regrettably for the members perhaps, I have four portfolios and I have only touched on one of them at this point. The others are Colleges and Universities, women's issues and Skills Development. Let me deal with the one that is supposedly in the speech and then deal with the others, which are not dealt with.

The first one I would like to deal with is women's issues. The government is very big on the question of safety and security in our society and, as a result, the first announcement given out by the government since the throne speech happened to concern battered women in our society and an augmentation of \$5.4 million for services to those women as a symbol of what the throne speech was really all about.

I say thank you for the increase. Depending on how you want to look at it, to be generous, it is as much as 17 per cent on certain lines in the budgets involved, but it misses the point about what the essential problem is now around the problems of battered women.

In 1982, I referred out to the standing committee on social development this issue of wife battering. We produced in that summer of 1982 one of the best reports, in my view, that has been produced by any committee. Many of the recommendations were picked up in 1983 by the Conservative government at the time. Some of them were picked up in 1986 by the Attorney General (Mr Scott) and the Minister of Community and Social Services, as they recognized the problems in the court system, on the one hand, and the need to get to the kids of violent families if they wanted to break the cycles involved. There are fundamental aspects of this report that

still have not been touched. The situation today is as tragic for many women as it was then.

1700

What I think bothered me most about the announcement, which is the substance of the government's move for women and security, was that it seemed to be taking credit for a major expansion in the number of spaces available to women in shelters around Ontario. The problem with having been here for 10 years and having dealt with this issue for so long is that I happen to know that that is not true.

I was disappointed to see them picking a figure from 1981 and comparing it with today and saying, "Isn't it wonderful what we as Liberals have done since that time in the increasing of spaces?" In point of fact, the spaces were increased from 1982, when we started dealing with this report, to 1985 when this government came in. In point of fact, the last minister under the Tories who dealt with this matter, Mr Elgie, increased the number of locations and shelters to a proposed 81 in 1984.

In August 1985, there were already 742 beds available in the 48 transition houses in the province. This government has not added any new spaces. The minister admitted that the figure today was around 770 spaces that were available in Ontario. In 1985, we produced information that showed that individual centres were turning away 700, 1,000, 800, 600 women per year who were coming in in an emergency fashion and demanding shelter from a violent spouse.

The latest information that has been collected is that what we presumed was a problem of one out of 10—that is, that one woman in 10 would be physically abused at some point during her life—is now being adjusted to one out of eight, by the latest in statistical information developed. The shelters are still turning away people in the same fashion now as they were in 1985.

Some shelters have actually closed because they just could not handle the financial problems that they were facing, and I use the example of Sault Ste. Marie as a prime example. What the government did was improve the working conditions for women in these homes, and for that I am very pleased. But it did nothing to make it more accessible to abused women in the community.

The second thing that annoyed me enormously about that statement by the minister was that an announcement was made for a study of the rate of abuse and the kind of abuse that physically disabled women were facing in Ontario. The Disabled Women's Network of Toronto held a

news conference in our media studio two years ago at which they showed with, as I said the other day, horrifying common sense the fact that disabled women are the most abused group in our society because we know that abusers use their physical power to show their power and control over somebody, because that is all they have and they are feeling very insecure in themselves for other reasons.

If you happen to be physically weak because you are disabled, as well as being a woman who may not be as strong as your spouse anyway, you can understand why you are more likely to be victimized. To have the government announce a study after we have already had this information for years, when it knows that most of the transition homes in the province—and I would suggest almost all of the transition houses in the province—are not accessible to disabled people, is an affront to the group that did the work. The \$100,000 that it claims is going to go to that study—\$50,000 or so from this government—could easily have gone to try to help some of these homes become accessible. It would have been much more useful.

Again, I am used to these throne speeches having very little substance. One would have hoped, when it was short and pithy—and I do not have a speech impediment—that it might have had some meat to it for the small amount of things it was actually dealing with. In point of fact, each announcement that has come out subsequent to the throne speech, based on the throne speech, that has been in an area of my responsibility, has been a sham; or, in this case, has been insulting to some groups and not meeting the real problems that are out there.

I just say to the honourable member, for whom I have great respect, that if he wants to talk about protection of women in our society and their economic status, then let him announce things like moving faster on the pay equity legislation than he has done to this point. Let him talk about bringing in some changes to the pregnancy leave policies of Ontario, because at the moment we are in the worst shape of any province in the country in terms of the time it takes to be eligible to get leave.

I see the Speaker looking quizzical. I will be glad to explain it for him.

In our province, unless you happen to have negotiated a contract which says differently, it takes 63 weeks of straight-through, consistent employment to be eligible to take a pregnancy leave. That is longer than any other jurisdiction in this country. The way we are so rigid in terms

of when you can take it means that if you have a premature child in hospital for a month, you have to take your pregnancy leave at that point and you can only take it for the 15 weeks that are available to you under unemployment insurance.

Even the Tories in Ottawa have changed the amount of time you can get; now we can get up to 25 weeks for women. Why that was not in this throne speech rather than some of the fatuous things we have been talking about today, I just have no idea.

When I talk about what could have been done about the safety of women in our community, I would remind members—who I know do not read all my press releases; I try to send them to certain members because I know they read, but I know they all do not get them—that recently I pointed out a wonderful example of what has been done about women's security on the Toronto Transit Commission here in Toronto, a study that was done with women's groups going around all the stations on the TTC, most of the bus routes, to try to make them more safe for people.

If this government were really serious about dealing with women's sense of security in the public places of our province at this point, it would have put money forward and committed money to the various transit authorities across Ontario to do exactly the same kind of study involving women in the way the Metro example has done, and to help them make those kind of circumstances safer.

In the days of swarming—as that now becomes unfortunately in vogue, I am afraid, by some youth groups within our community here in Metropolitan Toronto and is likely, therefore, to be exported because of the profile it is being given—it is women who are going to be the victims. It seems to me that that would have been a very major way the government could have made an effort without a huge amount of cost.

Just to deal with the two other portfolios, if I might: The first is Colleges and Universities. I regret that none of the ministers of whom I am critic happen to be here today. I understand that we all have our different schedules and I am not complaining that they should be here; I did not give them notice that I was going to be speaking or I am sure they would have loved to have come. But I must say that in dealing in concepts of education, I am really concerned about where this conservative government—and I say this advisedly: small-c conservative government—is going in terms of access to universities.

This is a government which seems to think that tuition rates should rise. It thinks that changes to

the Ontario student assistance program can be minor and deal with the fact somehow that many people do not go on to university or do not stay in university because of the eligibility criteria, because of the amount of loan they are going to end up carrying.

I am sure the Speaker knows that people on average now are coming out of university, just a four-year program, with a \$12,000 deficit, a \$12,000 debt they have to pay back. That is something for which we need major redress, and we have not seen it in this budget. In fact, the announcement we had the other day from the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mrs McLeod) was very disappointing. I am not sure if members even understand it.

1710

Can I tell members about a couple of the things that have been done here? They will be happy to know that there has been an increase in the amount of child care allowance for sole-support mothers under the Ontario student assistance program; it has now gone from \$73 a week to \$76 a week. I do not know how many members have children in child care, but if they can find child care at \$76 a week these days, I need to hear about it quickly on a personal basis. It is very disconcerting that this is the kind of adjustment we get.

To look at a couple of the other matters in terms of the lack of reflection of the real costs to people, this government has not surveyed students to find out why they do not go on to university. We know children from poor families are still much less likely to go on to post-secondary education than are children from other families. Children from the French community have a much lower chance, about a 40 per cent chance, of going to college or university in comparison with an anglophone. If you happen to be an Indian, especially these days with our federal colleagues doing what they happen to be doing on university access for native people, you have got virtually no chance of going to a university at all. Again, I hoped we might have seen some symbols which are a little stronger than this kind of tinkering, Tory tinkering that we have seen.

I would like to ignore the Ministry of Skills Development at the moment, if I might, because I think that on the whole it has been such a pathetic performance by that ministry. As I said in the past, it really needs to be disbanded. I hope at some point or other that is politically possible for the government to do, for a number of reasons, not the least of which is its terrible sense

of priorities around funding for literacy and other kinds of matters. Again, this is not the time for that speech: I will give that on another day and take it apart piece by piece.

I would like to conclude my remarks on one final matter which members who have been here any length of time know is of supreme importance to me, and that is the issue of poverty in the province. Although I am not the critic for that area any more, my heart is still there. I am really delighted by the way my successor, the member for Hamilton West (Mr Allen), has taken on that particular portfolio for our party.

It was in 1981 that I became the critic for Community and Social Services and decided to make poverty my major issue. We were just going into a recession at that time, and I was really concerned that the middle class, which was already feeling quite strapped financially, was not going to be very open to more money going to the poor. Yet in the statistics I had in my hand it was clear that our poor had fallen way behind under the Tory regime of the time and were going to be desperately hit by that recession, if we did not do something.

Over the years I did a number of things to try to bring the point home and to get people to focus on it, from outrageous gimmicks like the welfare diet to producing reports on poverty in Ontario to finding, as some members will recall, people sleeping in the stairwells at city hall garage in Toronto. It has been a frustrating number of years because when we see what governments have done, there has been no major change that has happened. It was therefore in January 1986 that I asked that we establish something like a Social Assistance Review Committee.

I was pleased that a number of months later that committee was established and by the kind of people who were on it and the kind of process that was established under George Thomson at that time. Quite frankly, when I saw the report come out late last year, I could not believe that finally somebody was actually moving so comprehensively on this issue area. I was trying not to be too Pollyannaish in my response to it in saying this is the blueprint for change, this is the salvation for a lot of the poor we have, but I was tremendously pleased by what had taken place.

When I listened to the member for Mississauga West just before me talking about increases of seven per cent that had been given in January in spite of the recommendations of the Thomson committee, and speaking of this in some positive terms, I started to get nervous; I started, frankly, to get a bit of a chill that the government has not

understood what Thomson's report is all about and the scope it says this must be tackled on.

When I read the throne speech, and I have read it over several times now, I tried not to get myself too sceptical or too excited; it was a kind of funny emotional position here in terms of where I wanted to be, but I read it and did not see anything precise referring to Thomson. I did not see anything precise saying, "We'll do the first stage." I did not see anything precise saying, "As part of this, we are going to understand that the social assistance rates as a base have to be increased enormously."

I did not see that. I saw the language of the retraining. I saw the speechwriters' jargon of "paycheques, not welfare cheques." I ask, is this real or is this some kind of easy moving of the easy people off welfare and maybe of some of those who should not be moved off? I cannot tell if this is progressive or not. I have been waiting for this budget with bated breath.

I hear some of the things the Treasurer has been saying. My experience has been that signals are given from time to time by treasurers leading up to budgets and one must have one's ears attuned. I hear him saying that if the federal finance minister's budget is too hard and people who are on unemployment insurance now are likely to drop off more quickly on to welfare and our rolls are to increase, maybe he cannot do what he wants to do.

I say to myself, and I have felt this for the past three to four years when we have had the affluence we have had, if we cannot help the poor at this stage, when can we possibly do it?

I wish the language had been more forthright in the speech. I just wish it had been more precise, more congratulatory of that commission, more accepting of the principle that had talked about the holistic approach it wanted to take to the poverty issue and had not used the traditional throne speech vagaries.

Members opposite might be surprised, but I would be up today applauding the government unreservedly if it had done that. If it had indicated that stage 1 of Thomson was acceptable—quite frankly, as an individual I do not necessarily agree with the steps he and the commission wanted to take; I, as members know, have a different analysis if they have read any of the literature I produced on this—I would have been up here today possibly attacking the puffery of its education initiatives as I have just done, but I would be unreservedly thanking it for being the only government in North America at this point that had a progressive vision of welfare and

welfare reform, because that is how important the Thomson report is.

The only thing that comes close was what Dukakis did a number of years ago in Boston, and it was a very limited kind of initiative, which is just a tiny part of what Thomson is talking about. There is nothing like this kind of philosophical framework anywhere in North America at this point. In fact, everything is going in the other direction. What an opportunity, when we talk about Liberal symbols, to be a beacon of hope and progressivity for the rest of what is a fairly right-wing and reactionary world around welfare politics at this point.

I hope that the Treasurer makes me the elated individual I would like to be and that I will be able to stand up and say that kind of thank you. But at this stage, I am having to pull my punches and I am still willing to wait; but he is making me very nervous.

Mr Speaker, I just conclude by thanking you for your patience and the members opposite for the modicum of heckling that was involved today and by saying that this was at least the shortest speech from the throne that I have witnessed, and for most members this was probably the shortest response I have made; so both of these things are good things.

1720

Mr McLean: I am pleased to have this opportunity to provide a few thoughts on the throne speech, which I believe was filled with motherhood remarks repeated previously and promises that were never kept, and which lacked substance in some pretty important areas that must be addressed if the government seriously wants to build a better future for our children, as it claims it does.

One promise contained in the extremely short, 11-page throne speech is the promise to make people live longer. The government may be successful in making people live longer, but this same government is certainly not giving people much to live for.

What the people got on Tuesday, 25 April 1989, with this throne speech was a pie-in-the-sky vision of the future, a rehash of broken promises from the past and a failure to address many important issues that are facing the people of Ontario.

The government has also resorted again to blaming the federal government for the lacklustre performance of the provincial government, and in some cases this government has decided to retreat in the face of adversity by looking to the federal government to solve its problems.

This government continues to drift aimlessly and to look elsewhere for direction; this government continues with its policy of "hurry up and do nothing." It continues to make promises that it cannot keep; it continues to make promises it never intends to keep; and the government continues to make promises it apparently does not want to keep.

I would like to spend a few moments addressing some of the areas—and they are very few—mentioned in the throne speech and I am particularly concerned about. These areas include education, social assistance, health care and the environment. Then I would like to turn my attention to areas that were never even mentioned in the throne speech. These include agriculture, tourism, northern Ontario, the housing crisis and senior citizens.

The throne speech outlined a long-term vision for education in Ontario by promising to reduce class size and requiring all school boards to offer junior kindergarten classes for four-year-olds. The promise to reduce class size was actually announced about three years ago as part of an 11-point program, which included a \$297-million commitment in the first year. In fact, two years later the government has met only about one half of this commitment.

The proposal to provide a junior kindergarten for four-year-olds looks to me like a sneaky way of getting around the issue of providing more day care spaces in Ontario. The government is telling teachers they will now have to wear two hats in the classroom. They will have to become highly paid babysitters while retaining their roles as teachers.

I think the government should take a serious look at the day care issue rather than dumping our children into the laps of teachers in our already overcrowded school system.

The throne speech made a watered-down reference about implementing some of the recommendations contained in the Social Assistance Review Committee report without making any direct statement about this extremely important document.

The government decided instead to point out that social reforms are a shared responsibility with the federal government, and noted with glee that federal spending restraints may limit the province's ability to achieve any major revamping of this province's social assistance system.

The government must make immediate moves to introduce new incentives to work, to begin the move to equate the rates, particularly in the area

of shelter and to eliminate a host of unfair rules and procedures.

The recent march against poverty from Sudbury, Ottawa and Windsor did a great deal to focus public attention on the need to reform Ontario's social assistance system. It appears that the provincial government failed to take any notice.

It is apparently very difficult for the government to realize that about one sixth of the people in Ontario live in poverty. By actual count, about 552,000 people receive social assistance in one form or another, and they represent only 42 per cent of the people who live in poverty.

Another 58 per cent of our poor belong to the working poor: those who have a worker in the family but cannot earn enough to pay the bills. For example, about 30 per cent of our farmers—who by the way were completely ignored in the throne speech—live in financially strained circumstances.

The government fails to realize that poverty is just as rural as it is urban. Farmers may not be unemployed, but no matter how hard or how long they work, they just cannot make ends meet, and so they fall into debt and lose hope.

Our farmers were not included in the government's long-term vision of the future. Our cheap food policy is neither kind nor just to our farmers. In a nutshell, they are part of an economic system that does not treat them fairly. They earn less than the minimum wage even though they produce what we cannot live without, and yet our farmers would make a decent living if only paid fair prices. Others in the food chain prosper well, but not farmers. That is what I call injustice.

Hon Mr Conway: Allan, tell us what they really think in Oro township. Pretend you're on county council—none of this prepared speech business.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr McLean: The government should realize that it becomes the responsibility of any society to collaborate with its farming community to ensure productivity and fair distribution. This implies that we do our bit to ensure that the inheritors of the good earth can stay on it, work it profitably and preserve it for future generations.

Any modern province like Ontario that fails to protect and promote its farming community is heading for trouble. A province that cannot be reasonably self-sufficient and secure in its production of food risks losing a precious measure of independence, security and prosperity.

My great hope is that this government wakes up and becomes more aware and more ashamed of existing poverty, whether it is rural or urban. Social change should attempt to help people work, be properly paid and become self-reliant. Dependency on social assistance is not an ideal and far from it.

Mr Black: There are more people working now than worked in this province for years, and you know it. What do you mean by people working? Look at the unemployment rates. Get serious.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr McLean: In the area of health care the government tosses around motherhood phrases about health promotion, disease prevention, providing accessible, affordable and appropriate health services for all and helping people to live longer lives. These types of platitudes look good on paper, sound good when spoken, and there is certainly no way anyone can take issue with such motherhood statements.

The government has chosen to speak in sweeping generalities rather than providing specifics on putting an end to heart surgery delays, such as Lloyd Crawford of Oro township continues to experience; expanding our health care delivery system by telling hospital boards whether or not they can proceed with new construction, as is the case of Orillia's Soldiers' Memorial Hospital; and solving Ontario's critical shortage of nursing personnel.

Ontario's health care system has suffered from a series of crises lately. Unfortunately, the people who are caught in the crunch are the little guys: the weak, the old and the helpless. It was only a few months ago that a massive show of public support pressured the government to save the Red Cross homemakers' program. Today the Victorian Order of Nurses home care program is threatened by a \$2.5-million deficit.

The VON made more than three million visits to patients in their own homes last year. A visit cost \$28.61. The Ministry of Health paid the organization only \$27.73 per visit. The accumulated deficit now threatens the very existence of the program. Comparing the cost of home care with institutional care, it is approximately \$300 per day. It is obvious the VON service is a tremendous bargain.

A report by Price Waterhouse commissioned by the Ministry of Health last year estimated that the home care program saves the government over \$500 million a year in operational funding and saved about \$1.8 billion last year in capital funding, yet the financial arrangements with the

current government are nickel-and-diming the agency to death.

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The concept of government support for home care was introduced over 20 years ago by the Ontario Progressive Conservatives under John Robarts. Their objectives in keeping patients at home were both humanitarian and economic. Patients are happier and recover more quickly and the cost is minimal compared to institutional care. The need for home care has never been greater and that need will continue to increase as our population ages.

The VON branch in Simcoe East is an important part of our community, providing vital services. As their representative, I will continue to press the government to support these services so the home care program can continue its excellent work: to help people at home and to keep them at home rather than in institutions. These nurses offer generous care and are to be commended for a job well done.

The government continues to ignore our deteriorating environment and our growing garbage crisis in Ontario. By introducing the so-called Cleantario lottery fund, the government has clearly indicated that it does not share public concern over the protection of our environment. The government is gambling that a game of chance will save and protect our environment. I am afraid that our environment will end up crapping out.

As well, the government says it will establish a comprehensive waste reduction strategy aimed at reducing solid waste by 50 per cent by the year 2000. This is only a reannouncement of a recent recycling strategy which included mandatory recycling.

It should be noted that mandatory recycling was something this same government voted against when my colleague the member for Mississauga South (Mrs Marland) proposed it in her private member's bill last fall.

I think I should make note of areas that were not even mentioned in the throne speech. Along with ignoring agriculture and farmers, there was also no reference to northern Ontario. Apparently our people in the north are second-class citizens in the eyes of this government.

Tourism generates unparalleled economic and employment opportunity, substantially reduces our provincial travel deficit and attracts our rightful share of world travel and tourism revenues. It did not even rate one mention in the throne speech.

The lack of housing initiatives in the throne speech indicates to me that the government believes the affordable housing crisis has ended, and the government is sadly and completely wrong.

The throne speech also shows that the government has chosen to ignore the role of the senior citizens in our society, their achievements and their active involvement in our communities. Seniors deserve more than this government offered them, because everything we all enjoy so much in this province today is a direct result of the hard work and efforts of our senior citizens in the past. This government's lack of support for our senior population is a sad commentary on the state of affairs in this province. Apparently senior citizens do not fit into the long-term vision.

I would like to spend a few minutes to focus the attention of my colleagues here in the Legislature on the riding of Simcoe East and how I believe the throne speech fails to address many of the issues facing the people in my riding.

One of the long-term directions mentioned in the throne speech includes maintaining a sense of safety and security in our communities to ensure Ontario's wellbeing and development. Again, we have a case of government talking in generalities with no specifics involved at a time when it is freezing or reducing its share of funding.

This government has continued to operate under the misguided impression that the taxpayers' pockets are lined with gold. After raising the sales tax last spring, the government then arbitrarily froze transfer payments to all of the municipalities in Ontario. This likely means there will be substantial mill rate increases across the province. Day care, sewers, roads, transit for disabled people and social assistance are among the services associated with the grant freeze. The government has now forced municipalities into the position of having to decide whether it is best to cut back on these services or increase taxes. That is a no-win situation if I ever heard of one.

Historically, the general support grant from the province to the municipality is based on the previous year's municipal levy, with an inflationary increment built in. This year, however, the government chose to freeze grants at the 1988 level at a cost of millions of dollars to Ontario's municipalities. The government's action will result in a cost of approximately \$150,000 to the city of Orillia, while the cost to the town of Penetanguishene will be about \$34,000. For communities throughout Simcoe county, the

impact of the government's freeze will be dramatic and devastating.

The provincial government must get its own fiscal house in order, and municipal governments are struggling to provide local services with shrinking municipal dollars. The provincial government must stop implementing new municipal service levels without the necessary accompanying provincial funds.

In Simcoe county there are 734 kilometres of country roads, including 33.5 kilometres of the Orillia Suburban Roads Commission and 59 kilometres of Barrie Suburban Roads Commission. In 1988, the Simcoe county road budget amounted to more than \$5.9 million, and the levy for road purposes in the townships topped the \$3.1 million level.

In the larger context of Ontario, 60 per cent of municipal roads are in only fair condition, and 38,000 kilometres of paved roads require resurfacing or rebuilding within the next five years.

Statistics report that nearly 1,500 bridges are deficient and quite possibly even dangerous. At least 30 per cent of the bridges in Ontario need to be replaced or rehabilitated within the next five years.

The 133,000-kilometre road network in Ontario is worth \$40 billion. It is the largest capital asset municipal and provincial governments have to manage, yet this government allows cracks to develop in these roads and these cracks develop into potholes and then it costs three times as much to repair the damage.

The government's decision to freeze unconditional grants and to flat-line road funding is forcing the municipal governments of such communities as Orillia, Penetanguishene, Coldwater, Elmvalle and such townships as Rama, Mara, Orillia, Flos, Tiny, Oro and Medonte into becoming the poor cousins in the government family.

They are being forced to take on more and more of the Ontario government's responsibilities. We are now seeing property taxes rising at an unacceptable rate to fund what should be provincial government responsibility. That is just not fair, nor is it an acceptable state of affairs.

In the throne speech, the government said its long-term direction is to provide accessibility to quality health care for every resident of Ontario. I believe that should include those residents in Simcoe East regardless of ability to pay.

Accessibility to health care in the Midland, Penetanguishene and Orillia area is a prime concern to the public. In these communities,

accessibility is declining because Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital is bursting at the seams and services are stretched to the limit. Granted this government made a \$30-million commitment towards renovations of the existing hospital building fund more than one year ago, but since then hospital officials have determined that the existing site is not large enough to support any renovation or expansion and consultants have recommended a \$75-million proposal to renovate the existing facility into a chronic care unit and the construction of a second campus for acute care.

Officials from the Ministry of Health met with hospital officials more than a month ago to discuss this proposal and indicated that the minister would make a decision about the proposal within the next few weeks. In fact, the Minister of Health was aware of this proposal and the consultants' report in January 1988, and she promised to make a final decision on whether or not construction could proceed by March of that year. The minister has been and continues to be strangely silent about this matter.

1740

Local hospital fund-raisers have surpassed the \$5-million goal towards a share of the original expansion proposal. In fact, more than \$5.5 million has been raised towards the \$7 million the hospital needs for its share of the second \$75-million construction and renovation project.

By responding wholeheartedly to this fund-raising campaign the public has shown its commitment to the project, and now it is time for the Minister of Health to show her commitment by indicating to the hospital board if construction can finally begin. If the Minister of Health's response is no, then I would like to suggest another way of freeing up hospital beds for acute care patients and for relieving the strain on hospital services in Orillia.

In the past, I have told the Minister of Community and Social Services that he should find alternative uses for the Huronia Regional Centre in Orillia as he proceeds with his policy of moving residents out of such institutions and into the community if they are able to live on their own. In the past, I have asked the minister to consider using the Huronia Regional Centre as a facility to house and treat Alzheimer's patients. As well, I have suggested that Huronia Regional Centre could be converted into a Workers' Compensation Board facility to research work-related injuries and rehabilitation problems and for therapy designed to reintroduce injured workers back into the workplace gradually.

In both cases, my suggestions would not require the construction of an expensive new building because one already exists. In both cases, my suggestions could mean retraining for those already employed at the centre rather than forcing them on to the unemployment rolls as developmentally handicapped residents are gradually moved into the community. In both cases, my suggestions have fallen on deaf ears.

But if I am anything, I am determined, so I will try again. Why does the Minister of Health not consider taking over part or all of the Huronia Regional Centre, renovating the existing facilities on that site and then using them to house and treat chronic care patients? If that should happen, then the existing Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital could be used for acute care.

Another area of concern to the people of Simcoe East, and an area that the provincial government has failed to address, is the garbage crisis in Simcoe county and throughout all Ontario. The Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley) decided in 1987 to close the Pauzé landfill site which serves six north Simcoe municipalities: Midland, Penetanguishene, the villages of Port McNicoll and Victoria Harbour and the townships of Tiny and Tay. These same municipalities are now forced to transport their garbage to the Keele Valley landfill site north of Toronto, at an enormous cost to the ratepayers.

The Minister of the Environment claims this is his solution to the garbage crisis, but I believe he is only engaging in a game of musical landfill sites with this province's garbage.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr McLean: The minister fails to realize that it demeans the people of this province to have their garbage transported from one municipality to another. Americans can burn our garbage and send it back north to us in the form of air pollution. Even today, a member was speaking about its coming from Detroit. Rather than offering platitudes in the throne speech about providing a clean and safe environment or setting up a lottery to get the people to do his job for him, I think the Minister of the Environment should take the environment and the garbage crisis a little more seriously than he has in the past.

Enough talk. More action is what the people of Ontario want, require and deserve. This government continues to abdicate its responsibilities for solving Ontario's frightening solid waste disposal crisis. Ontario's environmental integrity could be severely compromised by the government's short-term contingency plans. The 1989 Liberal

throne speech is clearly an attempt to give the public perceptions of action without any realistic forethought or planning as to how programs are to be implemented. Clearly the ship of state in Ontario continues to drift aimlessly.

It is interesting to note that in the last 28 months this government has added approximately 8,300 new employees to the government payroll. Responsible management is what we should be accounting for. This government has failed to provide responsible management to lower the debt in good times, because you never know when you may have to pay it. I think the throne speech proves my point.

Thank you for the opportunity, Mr Speaker, to put a few words on the record with regard to the throne speech.

Mr Offer: I am very pleased to rise in this debate on the speech from the throne. I am particularly pleased because it gives one a real opportunity to comment on the very precise, clear and focused priorities of this government. I say that they are at once focused, but also that they apply to a wide range of ministries of the government.

I think the priorities we have seen through this throne speech clearly indicate where this government is going to be moving in the next while. It clearly indicates what this government has determined to be the priorities, not only for it but also for the people of this province.

We have heard from members of the opposition that there is no focus, that there is no agenda. When one looks at the throne speech, one says, "How can they possibly say that?" If there is anything that is as clear in this throne speech as ever before, it is the focus, it is the direction and it is the concern this government places on the issues that are important to the people of this province.

I would like to recite those very clear, focused priorities as indicated in the throne speech:

"1. Building on our economic strengths...."

In the time permitted, I am going to deal with that particular priority in some detail in the time ahead.

"2. ...making our education system a more effective springboard to opportunity;

"3. Reforming social assistance to help people move from dependence to self-reliance;

"4. Keeping our communities and neighbourhoods safe and secure;

"5. Promoting healthy lifestyles and preserving quality health care;

"6. Providing leadership in environmental protection."

This is indeed a clear and precise agenda. It is a clear and precise agenda for this province, for this government and for all the ministries contained within it. It is an agenda that meets the specific concerns of many persons within the province.

We know that this province, and indeed this country, is undergoing great change, a change of almost a daily nature. We are a much different province from that of years ago. We do not have what I think is in many ways a luxury: slow and methodical change. That is, or was, a luxury of many years ago. The province of Ontario, and in fact the country of Canada, and the communities in the cities that make up this province do not have that luxury.

1750

There is a technological type of change going on that presents challenges and opportunities, but unless we are ready to grab at those challenges and meet those opportunities, we will fall behind. It is important that the first priority in this throne speech states, "Building on our economic strengths." I believe the clear message to this province, to the communities, to our industrial and manufacturing base, and to all the persons in the workforce who make up this province is that this government has a clear message, a clear agenda to make certain we are able to meet that technological change and to grab at the opportunity that presents itself to make this province move forward and be a leader in many different sectors.

As I have indicated, today there is ongoing and intense technological change and this change foists upon our workplace a challenge to meet that type of change, not to be pulled along by the change but to be a leader in change, to be a leader in the workforce and to be a leader in this global type of economy.

When we talk about this type of ongoing intense change, governments rely on their workforce. We rely on our workforce to be able to meet such change. The challenges come not just from within this province or indeed this country, but from countries outside. We will have to be able to compete in a real and meaningful way. Not to do so will make many persons across this province suffer, but to be able to meet such a challenge will be of benefit to all. It will be of benefit to our communities, to our cities and to this province. We will become stronger, we will become a leader and we will be able to move forward in the years ahead in a real and meaningful way.

In dealing with the competition, not to do so is something that can impact in a most drastic fashion, impact in such a way that it can truly affect our very quality of life, impact upon our communities and upon how we are able to meet the changing marketplace, not only of this province but of this world. It is important that a government realize this is important and realize it must be of the highest priority. That is why it is important that we have seen in this throne speech, as the first priority, "Building on our economic strengths." To do that is to make this province strong. It is to make the workforce able to react, to lead and to meet the change and challenge of the future.

We are fortunate in this province to have what may be called a broad economic and manufacturing base. Such a base provides an opportunity for us. It provides an opportunity for many persons. But it is necessary, as I indicated earlier, that this opportunity exist for us to take hold of, for us to grab. We have to have a government able to provide the mechanism to permit our workforce and our industries to attain those goals in a clear, precise, focused and meaningful way.

We can no longer content ourselves just to do well. We have the ability and we have the base. I believe that through our workforce and through this government and the leadership of the Premier (Mr Peterson), we have the courage to go and say, "Yes, we can compete in the world economy, in the global market, and yes, we will compete in the world economy and the global market."

In this province we have a Premier's Council which has provided a blueprint for competing in the international marketplace. In meeting this challenge and opportunity, we are aggressively pursuing new markets for our goods and services. In addition, this government is supporting the growth of Ontario-based companies as they compete in this global economy, because as they compete and as they prosper, so do many other persons in this province, so do many other businesses. The spinoff is such that all benefit in the province.

Our economy must remain strong. When that happens, many persons benefit, both directly and indirectly. However, when it does not, when it fails, we all suffer. So it is important that it not fail. This throne speech, with the priority that this government places on our economic wellbeing, is clear and it is direct and it is something which will benefit the people, the manufacturers, the workforce, the industries, both directly and indirectly. It is something which is extremely

important in being, and indicated as the first priority.

We have to keep in mind that as we compete, as we prosper, we must also, as a caring government, realize that not all prosper, that there are those less fortunate, and this presents a challenge for many persons to meet. It presents a challenge for this government, a challenge which we see in the throne speech as a priority of this government, because, as I have indicated, we are, as indicated through this throne speech, reforming social assistance to help people move from dependence to self-reliance.

In a province as rich and as talented as this province is, in a province where so many prosper, we have to always keep in mind that it is not all who prosper. There are those who need help. There is the necessity for government to help those. This government, in terms of its priorities, as indicated in the throne speech, clearly says that we are caring, that we are ready to move, that we are ready to build on the programs which we have already introduced, that we are ready to not only do that but to take a look at the social assistance program in itself to see improvements, in a fundamental way, which can be achieved.

Over the years our record demonstrates a commitment for helping those less fortunate. I have noted just some of the accomplishments from the Ministry of Community and Social Services since 1985. There are three broad issues, such as—

Mr Reycraft: Tell us what they are.

Mr Offer: I have been asked to tell you what they are. One type of issue is major improvements in the family benefits allowance and the

general welfare assistance benefits. A second deals with the appointment of the independent public review under George Thomson, which I will deal with in the future; and third, the expansion of employment programs for social assistance recipients.

If I might go back to the improvements which we have announced in the Family Benefits Act and the General Welfare Assistance Act, yes, they are improvements in terms of financial assistance over the years, and that is important, because the needs continue, the needs grow, the demands continue and the obligation and responsibility on government continues to grow. It is important that the government be there to respond, and let it be said, and make no mistake about it, that the record of this government shows that it has been there to respond, it has improved the programs, it has conducted a study in terms of a fundamental change to social assistance.

I see I have a few seconds left, and in terms of the adjournment I will be asking to continue tomorrow, but I just take a look from January 1986. There was an announcement of \$81.6 million as a general rate increase of four per cent, special increases in terms of winter clothing and seven per cent on basic allowances earmarked for children.

In September 1986 a further \$25 million was announced in terms of special improvements in the shelter subsidy program.

I see that you are motioning my attention to the clock, Mr Speaker.

On motion by Mr Offer, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 1801.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

- Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)
 Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)
 Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)
 Beer, Charles (York North L)
 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)
 Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)
Bradley, Hon James J., Minister of the Environment (St Catharines L)
 Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breaugh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)
 Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)
 Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)
Caplan, Hon Elinor, Minister of Health (Orillia L)
 Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)
 Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
 Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)
 Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)
 Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)
Conway, Hon Sean G., Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)
 Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)
 Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)
 Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)
Curling, Hon Alvin, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)
 Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)
 Dietsch, Michael M. (St Catharines-Brock L)
Eakins, Hon John F., Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)
Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A., Speaker (Perth L)
 Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)
Elston, Hon Murray J., Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L)
 Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)
 Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)
 Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)
 Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)
 Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)
 Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)
 Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)
Fontaine, Hon René, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)
Fulton, Hon Ed, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)
Grandmaitre, Hon Bernard C., Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)
 Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)
 Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)
 Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)
 Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)
 Hart, Christine E. (York East L)
 Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)
Hošek, Hon Chaviva, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)
 Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Kanter, Ron (St Andrew-St Patrick L)
Kerrio, Hon Vincent G., Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)
 Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)
 Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)
Kwinter, Hon Monte, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L)
 Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)
 LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)
 Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)
 Lipsett, Ron (Grey L)
 Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L)
 MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L)
 Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)
 Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)
Mancini, Hon Remo, Minister without Portfolio (Essex South L)
 Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)
 Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)
 Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L)
 McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)
 McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)
 McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)
 McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)
 McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)
McLeod, Hon Lyn, Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)
 Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

- Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste Marie NDP)
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)
Nixon, Hon Robert F., Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics (Brant-Haldimand L)
Oddie Munro, Hon Lily, Minister of Culture and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)
O'Neil, Hon Hugh P., Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Quinte L)
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)
Patten, Hon Richard, Minister of Government Services (Ottawa Centre L)
 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)
Peterson, Hon David R., Premier and President of the Council and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (London Centre L)
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)
Phillips, Hon Gerry, Minister of Citizenship (Scarborough-Agincourt L)
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott and Russell L)
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)
Ramsay, Hon David, Minister of Correctional Services (Timiskaming L)
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-Walkerville L)
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)
 Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)
Riddell, Hon Jack, Minister of Agriculture and Food (Huron L)
 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)
Scott, Hon Ian G., Attorney General (St George-St David L)
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)
Smith, Hon E. Joan, Solicitor General (London South L)
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)
Sorbara, Hon Gregory S., Minister of Labour (York Centre L)
 South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)
 Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)
 Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)
Sweeney, Hon John, Minister of Community and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)
 Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)
 Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)
 Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)
Ward, Hon Christopher C., Minister of Education (Wentworth North L)
 Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)
Wilson, Hon Mavis, Minister without Portfolio (Dufferin-Peel L)
 Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)
Wong, Hon Robert C., Minister of Energy (Fort York L)
Wrye, Hon William, Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

*The alphabetical list of members appears in each issue. Lists of the members of the executive council, parliamentary assistants and members of committees, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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No. 7

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Second Session, 34th Parliament
Thursday, 4 May 1989

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, 4 May 1989

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

MAYWORKS '89

Miss Martel: As Culture and Communications critic for the New Democratic Party, it is my pleasure again this year to remind members, if they have not already noticed, that the Mayworks Festival is taking place in Metropolitan Toronto this week. The Mayworks Festival is holding its fourth annual festival and is sponsored by the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto and York region.

and around the city. Mayworks '89 is a salute to the creativity of working people and the social role of progressive artists. It is a time of celebration and positive creative expression featuring art and photographic exhibits, concerts, workshops, videos, theatrical performances and readings.

Mayworks '89 is centred on May Day and runs to 6 May. As a part of this year's Music in the Workplace program, the Ruth Budd Quintet will bring a program of classical music to the Legislative Building on Friday, 5 May at 11:30 am. I invite and urge all members who are in the building, and staff as well, to attend and enjoy this musical event.

Congratulations to Mayworks and to all the talented and devoted people who have organized this festival. Best wishes for a most successful festival.

KATHY HARVEY

Mrs Marland: It gives me great pleasure to rise today and congratulate Kathy Harvey, Mississauga's Multiple Sclerosis Person of the Year for 1989. Kathy was diagnosed with MS 23 years ago and became disabled in 1973. In spite of her disability, Kathy has demonstrated great courage and depth of character. Kathy has always been a wonderful mother and encouraging motivator to her son, Cameron, and daughter, Erin.

Kathy has established herself as an excellent painter, with her art appearing on MS Christmas cards and MS society notepaper. She is a

compassionate and caring person with many supportive and admiring friends. Cameron has also been another achiever in the family and reached a pinnacle in 1986 when he became a world-class athlete and won the bronze medal in rowing at the World Rowing Championships in Nottingham, England.

In recognition of her determination and achievements, a presentation to Kathy Harvey was made last evening at the Toronto Blue Jays game at Exhibition Stadium. Best wishes, Kathy. You are a very special woman and mother. Thank you for being an inspiration to us all, and we all share with you the pride in your family's achievements.

SENIORS' INFORMATION DAY

Mr Dietsch: I would like to take this opportunity to advise the honourable members of this House of a very special event which will be taking place in my riding of St Catharines-Brock on Wednesday, 10 May. That is the eighth annual Seniors' Information Day at the Queen Elizabeth Centre in St Catharines.

The event, which is sponsored by Senior Citizens' Consultants, is an information-sharing day. Last year, 54 agencies were represented, ranging from health organizations to any organization that offers some type of service to seniors, attracting people from all over the city. The turnout last year was 1,600-plus and the organizers are expecting a larger crowd this year.

The St Catharines Transit Commission will offer free bus rides for seniors all day in order to facilitate their travel to and from the centre. Furthermore, Maclean Hunter Cable 10 will be present to film the activities, which will be reported on our community television.

The head of Senior Citizens' Consultants, Dulcie Pink, and her husband, Ernest, along with numerous other volunteers, have worked tirelessly on putting together this event. It is a shining example of our community's commitment to a better quality of life for our seniors. I ask that my colleagues join with me in applauding their efforts and wishing them the most successful information day to date.

HOME CARE

Mr Reville: Tomorrow this government will have one of many opportunities to put its money

where its mouth has been. Tomorrow the representative of the Victorian Order of Nurses will be meeting with the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan). The VON will be asking for three things: for the government to pick up its \$2.5-million deficit for the year ending 31 March 1989, to increase its per visit fee by about seven per cent and to institute a process whereby the VON can have some more flexibility in dealing with government as costs change and as the needs of its patients change.

As I understand it, the government has offered to pick up part of the deficit and to increase the per visit fee by about five per cent. That will not meet the needs of the Victorian Order of Nurses, and the Ministry of Health should know that because it has been advised about the order's needs since October 1988. If the government fails to respond to the reasonable demands of the VON, I think we can put down the budget speech as one of those tales told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANTS

Mr Eves: I am rising in the House today—and I am pleased to see that the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) is in attendance—to talk about the issue of northern health travel grants for the constituents of Parry Sound riding.

I thought quite seriously that we had put this issue to bed on 9 June 1988 when the Minister of Northern Development (Mr Fontaine) rose in his place in the House and announced that, effective 1 April 1989, all residents of the riding of Parry Sound, all residents of the districts of Parry Sound and Nipissing would be part of northern Ontario for the purposes of all programs administered by all ministries in the government.

There are no exceptions in those words. I think the intent is quite clear and I think the spirit is quite clear. The only ministry to date that has reneged on that commitment is the Ministry of Health with respect to its northern health travel grants program.

The definition of northern Ontario defines the territorial districts in northern Ontario that qualify for the northern health travel grants program. It is interesting to note that the district of Parry Sound is excluded in the current definition, as is indeed a great portion of the district of Nipissing.

If the Minister of Health intends to live up to the spirit and intent of this move, which I think is a well-needed one, and I think everybody in this House twice unanimously agreed to that, she will move those boundaries and move the distances

appropriately so that all residents of Parry Sound and Nipissing are treated equally.

1340

ERNEST C. DRURY

Mr Elliot: On 4 June 1989, the late Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Ernest C. Drury, will be inducted into the Ontario Agriculture Hall of Fame at the Ontario Agricultural Museum in Milton.

Known as the Farmer Premier, E. C. Drury has several connections with my riding of Halton North and specifically the town of Milton. A Milton high school, the E. C. Drury Secondary School, ensures that his name is still prominent locally.

After running unsuccessfully as an independent Liberal Conservative for the riding of North Simcoe in 1917, Drury was chosen as the leader of the elected farm members after the 1919 general election in Ontario.

When Premier Hearst resigned, Drury was asked to form a government under the banner of the United Farmers of Ontario. In 1920, Premier Drury won a by-election in what was then called the county of Halton. He served as the Premier of this province and the member for Halton until the fall of his government in May 1923.

A graduate of the Ontario Agricultural College, the Honourable E. C. Drury was an advocate of progressive farming techniques and a supporter of better agricultural education and co-operative action.

When the Honourable E. C. Drury passed away in 1968, the province lost a staunch supporter of the family farm and the whole agricultural sector.

He is a worthy inductee into the Agriculture Hall of Fame.

ANNUAL ORILLIA PERCH FESTIVAL

Mr McLean: My statement concerns the perch festival in Orillia that wraps up its eighth successful year this Sunday.

More than 10,000 anglers, young and old, male and female, were expected to converge on Orillia this year to test their fishing abilities in the waters of Lake Simcoe and Lake Couchiching. These avid anglers are vying for 72 of the \$1,000-tagged perch provided by business people in the district, plus a boat and motor and daily prizes for the largest perch reeled in each day.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the organizers of this year's Annual Orillia Perch Festival and to invite all members here today to come up to Orillia this weekend and

do battle with the mighty fighting perch, one of the finest pan fish in the province.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

BUDGET

Hon R. F. Nixon: Mr Speaker, I would like to advise the House that I intend to present the 1989 budget to the Legislature on Wednesday, 17 May at four o'clock in the afternoon, with your permission.

The Speaker: I will now call for responses to that lengthy statement.

RESPONSES

BUDGET

Mr Laughren: I appreciate the fact that the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) sent to us four pages in a brown envelope to make sure that his announcement was appropriately packaged.

It is not lost upon us either that on the day he chooses to make the announcement of his budget date he comes in wearing a blue tie. Every other day—

Hon Mr Conway: Yours is a lot bluer.

Mr Laughren: I am not announcing the date of the budget. We can only expect that what the Treasurer has in store for the people of Ontario is reflected in the colour of his tie.

I would say that it is about time we got to the provincial budget. We expect certain things in that budget, particularly given what the federal government has done with its budget. We also expect that we will be able to tell the difference between a Liberal budget and a Conservative budget on 17 May.

There is an enormous amount of work to be done in this province concerning the fairness of our tax system and the day has come when, surely to goodness, this Treasurer does not simply have to reflect the actions of the federal government and its draconian tax regime. There is an opportunity for this province to move in a different direction, and we will be looking forward to that on 17 May.

Mr Brandt: I want to respond very briefly on behalf of our party to the Treasurer's very interesting announcement of today. We are looking forward as well to the budget announcement.

I would like to just advise the Treasurer that I had the opportunity earlier today to meet with municipal leaders, as I did about a week ago, and they will be very interested in the announcements contained in the Treasurer's budget to see if they are treated equally as well in the transfer grant

program from the Treasurer to the local municipalities as in fact the province was treated by what some have referred to as draconian transfers from the federal to the provincial level.

It is interesting to note that there has been a slowdown in the provincial transfer program, which we fully acknowledge on this side of the House. There has been some reduction, but not a complete elimination of the transfer program. In the last budget the Treasurer had the audacity, I might add, to give the municipalities absolutely a zero transfer in terms of the unconditional grant program. They are extremely angry about that.

Hon R. F. Nixon: You call \$600 million zero?

Mr Brandt: The Treasurer knows full well that there was no increase whatever in the road subsidy program in transportation; there was no increase in the unconditional grant program, and that program results in a loss to municipal governments of hundreds of millions of dollars.

When the budget is announced, we will be looking for things like an equitable treatment of our school boards, of our municipalities and of the agencies and associations that this government has a responsibility to provide for in a financial sense. They make up many of the rules upon which these particular bodies are governed. They establish the standards. They establish what has to be done at the local levels by many of these boards and agencies, and yet they do not provide even a modest grant increase to take care of some of those programs.

We will sit here in anticipation on this side of the House awaiting the Treasurer's good word, because I know deep in his heart of hearts he is a fair man and I know he will treat those municipalities fairly. If he does not, he will hear word from this side of the House as to our anger at the Treasurer giving the backhand to the municipalities for still another year.

ORAL QUESTIONS

INCOME TAX

Mr B. Rae: I have a question for the Treasurer. It relates very directly to the weighty announcement that he made today about the timing of the budget.

I am sure the Treasurer will know that the Department of National Revenue publishes very extensive data on who pays tax and who does not. The latest year for which they have any information is 1986. I wonder if the Treasurer can tell us how he feels about this interesting tidbit from Revenue Canada, and that is that all of the people who made over \$250,000 in 1986 and paid not a cent to either the federal government or

the Ontario government in income tax—40 of them, making over a quarter of a million dollars each, and they did not pay a nickel in tax—are resident in Ontario.

Hon R. F. Nixon: The personal income tax field is a very productive one in the province. This year, when all the numbers are added up for the year just past, we expect to get well over \$10 billion—actually over \$11 billion—from that particular source. So the fact that some people do not pay it is quite a serious matter. The government of Canada has dealt with this on a number of occasions.

I think the member is aware, however, that the base upon which the provincial personal income tax is levied is a wholly federal base. We simply levy our tax as a percentage of federal tax payable. It might occur to the honourable member that if he really wants fairness and equity, he is in the wrong jurisdiction asking that question.

1350

Mr B. Rae: The person who is in the wrong jurisdiction is the Treasurer. He has the jurisdiction, if he wants, to levy what income taxes he wants and chooses to levy on the residents of this province. He knows it and everybody in this House knows it. The fact he is choosing to let 40 people make over \$250,000 and not pay a cent of tax is as much his responsibility under the laws of this country as it is Michael Wilson's. It is time he woke up and smelt the coffee when it comes to widespread tax avoidance in this province, as a result of tax rules for which he shares jurisdiction with the federal Minister of Finance.

The Speaker: Question?

Mr B. Rae: At the same time as those people are not paying income tax, it might be of interest to the Treasurer to know that in 1986, 722,000 people making less than \$10,000 in fact paid income tax to the government of Ontario. I wonder if the Treasurer can tell us, why are three quarters of a million people making less than \$10,000 having to pay income tax when there are 40 people making over \$250,000 who are not paying a nickel?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I think it would be worth while, if you will permit me, Mr Speaker, to respond to the lengthy editorial introduction the honourable member gave us to his supplementary question. While he is prepared to say, as always with total truth, that we have the responsibility to tax any way we want, still, we have a tax collection agreement with the government of Canada which means we accept the

federal tax base for reasons of economy and efficiency.

If he is indicating it is the position of the New Democratic Party that we ought to renounce that historic agreement, go to the expense of hiring our own tax collection authorities, provide our own facilities and provide the residents of Ontario with an entirely separate personal income tax machine, then perhaps he might as well say so, because it is an interesting alternative that has even occurred to me from time to time. Perhaps he might clarify that in his second supplementary.

Mr B. Rae: If the Treasurer is asking me for my opinion, I am saying very directly to the Treasurer that if the federal government is not prepared to have an income tax system that is fair, then it is time Ontario did have an income tax system that is fair. That is the issue before us. It will be no surprise to the Treasurer, but it is of interest, that well over 60 per cent of the tax-free loophole artists who are not paying any tax are men, and that well over 60 per cent of the people who are living well below the poverty line and who have to pay tax, when they should not have to pay any tax, are women.

My specific question for the Treasurer is this: The income tax system, as it is, is discriminatory between rich and poor, and it is discriminatory between men and women. I say to the Treasurer, if he is saying about the sales tax nationally that he does not want to get in with it because it is not fair, why does he not have a direct look at the tax agreement between Ottawa, the federal government, and the provincial government and say that Ontario is determined to have an income tax system that is fair?

The Speaker: Order.

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member, who follows events in this House very carefully, will know that we have made use of the flexibility that is available to us under the federal-provincial agreement to put a specially higher tax, a 10 per cent surtax, on incomes above \$80,000. I would surmise that the honourable member asking the question is one of the few members in the House who might possibly be fairly close to that limit, knowing his silver spoon antecedents.

Mr Breaugh: Robert, it's sticking to the shovel today; be careful.

Mr Mackenzie: You neck is starting to swell.

Interjections.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Oh, that is unacceptable, right?

On the other hand, he should also be aware that in this province we have a tax reduction program that is as generous as he will find anywhere, certainly compared with the government of Canada, which exempts those people at the low end from paying personal income tax. With a surtax to pay an extra 10 per cent on incomes above \$80,000 and the tax reduction at the lower end, we feel we have done a great deal to provide fairness, equity and progressiveness to the personal income tax system.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Kormos: I have a question of the Minister of Financial Institutions. Advocate General is a Winnipeg-based insurance company with most of its business right here in Ontario. Most of that business is some 40,000 insured persons being covered for their automobile insurance policies. It is a federally registered company and it was the subject of a federal windup order on 24 April because of insolvency.

Thousands of insureds in Ontario are now told that they have no insurance and that the 12-month premiums they paid two months ago, three months ago, four months ago or whenever will not be refunded, at least not for years and probably never. What did the minister's superintendent of insurance do to protect these thousands of insureds and drivers in Ontario from being ripped off for what may well be millions of dollars in premiums?

Hon Mr Elston: The matter of Advocate General is now in front of the courts in Manitoba. I can tell the honourable gentleman that the federal authorities have moved to deal with the issues they are best able to; that is the solvency questions with respect to the company. The superintendent of insurance in Ontario obviously, in terms of making it known there was no ability to write insurance, has taken that step. Obviously, that is in line with the responsibilities under the current situation.

Mr Kormos: I am told the ministry and the provincial superintendent of insurance did not utilize any of their jurisdiction, that they merely followed the federal government and the federal government's order. I am told that their involvement was merely to keep track of what the federal government is doing and that they have not even examined the work done by the federal government, even though they knew the federal government was commencing its examination towards the latter part of 1988. This does not seem to coincide with the statement of goals of the ministry, which are to ensure that insurance is

available and that insurers are financially capable of paying claims of policyholders.

How can the minister justify the failure of the superintendent of insurance to utilize jurisdiction under the Insurance Act?

Hon Mr Elston: The honourable gentleman is probably aware, because of his legal background, that there are certain jurisdictional issues that have to be met. There is jurisdiction in the federal government, particularly after court cases in the 1930s that establish federal occupation in the area of trade and commerce.

We have generally, as a result of that, maintained a very high vigilance in the area of product sales, distribution and things like that, but generally the financial affairs of a federally regulated, federally incorporated company have stayed with the federal people. That is the manner in which the proceedings were taken with respect to Advocate General.

Mr B. Rae: When all the legal faldral is said and done, Emelia Perry is a constituent of mine who contacted my office this week. She is one of the 40,000 people in this province who has a car insurance policy with Advocate General. She paid them \$1,800 just a couple of months ago. Her insurance will no longer be valid if in fact Advocate General loses its licence. Her money is with Advocate General and it will take months and years before she sees any of it back. In fact, she may never see any of it back if the company is wound up and found to be insolvent.

I want to ask the minister what he is going to do on behalf of Emelia Perry when it comes to getting her \$1,800 back from an insurance company that is not able to meet its obligations. He has been asleep at the switch, his people have been asleep at the switch, and along with 40,000 other people she is without any car insurance.

Hon Mr Elston: The honourable gentleman is not correct when he says we have been asleep at the switch. He knows he is wrong and he cannot say that. I appreciate the difficulty with which his constituent is faced; I appreciate that very fully. Have him send the material over to me and I will look into the details of the situation for him, but he cannot say what he just said about the regulators in this situation.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that I will be pleased to look at the situation personally, but he knows as well as I do that when matters of windup and other things are involved, there are people who are appointed by the courts to deal with it in a legal fashion. Sometimes there are difficulties that cannot be overcome. However, if there is an amount of money that is available for

distribution, then each of the insureds, each of the creditors of the company, will receive a proportional share in terms of the distribution.

In this situation of a federally incorporated insurance company, federally regulated for solvency, the federal authorities have taken the lead. I ask the honourable gentleman to send me the material so I can look into it further for him.

1400

HOME CARE

Mr Eves: I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Health. I have her glossy booklet here, *Deciding the Future of Our Health Care*. On page 2 it says, "Our objective is, of course, to keep people healthy—out of institutions and in their own communities as much as possible." Going on a little bit farther: "Home care is often a preferred alternative for seniors who would otherwise be in long-term care beds in hospitals or nursing homes. In 1987, chronic care patients accounted for over 25 per cent of total hospital patient days. We are examining the use of our institutional chronic care, now taking up thousands of more costly acute care beds. We believe it is time to re-evaluate our approach to long-term care...."

The Victorian Order of Nurses wrote to the minister in October 1988 to bring to her attention that the base funding for its organization does not reflect the complexity and changing nature of the services provided by visiting nurses, which her own ministry wants them to do more and more of, to assume more and more share of the load.

The Speaker: Question?

Mr Eves: The minister has been aware of the VON funding problems for at least over half a year, since October 1988, yet she has apparently ignored them.

The Speaker: Question?

Mr Eves: The minister is now talking about an 11th hour rescue. Does she not realize that an 11th hour rescue of the deficit does not really solve the fundamental problem, which is the base funding the VON receives?

Hon Mrs Caplan: The member opposite will know of our commitment not only to expand, but to develop the kind of home care and community-based alternatives that will allow people to live independently in their communities for as long as possible and will provide services to them in the most convenient way. He will know we have been reviewing how we provide those services.

The financial difficulties that have been determined by the Victorian Order of Nurses,

which provides an important service in this problem, are part of that ongoing review. He knows, as well, that I will be meeting with them tomorrow. I believe that by working together with them, we should be able to resolve the existing financial difficulties.

Mr Eves: The minister is asking the VON to do more and more, yet she refuses to provide it with the necessary dollars it needs to assume more and more of the burden of the health care system. The reason the VON has a deficit is that the base funding is inadequate and the minister has refused to address that issue. There is an ageing population, which she acknowledges. It calls for more intensive home care, which she says she is going to do.

More time has to be spent with each patient. For every extra minute of added time to the average length of visit a visiting nurse gives, it costs the VON \$1 million a year; that is, every time the average visit goes up by one minute. Yet without negotiation, consultation or meeting with the VON, the Ministry of Health unilaterally imposed a 1988-89 funding formula that does not reflect the current cost of its nursing service.

How can the minister stand in her place and say she is meeting with them tomorrow, that she is adopting a consultative, co-operative approach to government? They say, and they have said it in black and white, that the ministry unilaterally imposed this funding formula without any consultation or negotiation. Is she saying they are wrong?

Hon Mrs Caplan: For the information of the member opposite, there are some 38 home care programs across the province. I am quite proud of the fact that between 1985-86 and 1987-88, there has been a 60 per cent increase in the funding for home care in this province. We are now funding home care at a rate of \$245 million annually. Of course, there is much we still have to do, and we are working with the VON and the other providers of home care to see how they can provide their services in the most efficient manner.

Mr Eves: The minister makes note of the fact that she is meeting with the VON tomorrow, which is true. It is also interesting to note that the first the VON heard about this, despite the fact it had requested the meeting by letter of 10 January, was after the Premier (Mr Peterson) responded to a question I asked in the House on Monday. All of a sudden, the phone lines started to burn between the Ministry of Health and the VON.

I want to quote from the letter to the Minister of Health on 10 January 1989, "It is our belief that the 4.5 per cent increase neither recognizes VON's record of responsible fiscal management nor accommodates the true cost increases which we are experiencing, many of which reflect external factors beyond our control." They go on to say they are presently projecting, this year, an operating deficit of at least \$2 million for the 1988-89 fiscal year.

The Speaker: Question?

Mr Eves: "Given the magnitude and seriousness of the situation, the board of directors, VON, has asked me to request an urgent meeting with you in order that they can review our present circumstances and investigate possible resolution."

The Speaker: Question?

Mr Eves: Is the minister's response to a co-operative, consultative approach to give them a meeting this Friday after the Premier makes the commitment for her Monday in the House when she was not here and then her ministry—

The Speaker: Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Is the member for Parry Sound finished?

Hon Mrs Caplan: As the member knows full well, ministry officials have been meeting with the VON and other providers of home care services over the course of months to attempt to resolve difficulties. I can say to him that we will be meeting tomorrow, as we do with a number of groups on an ongoing basis, to try to resolve some of the structural and financial difficulties as we work together co-operatively in this province. I ask him to support those initiatives.

POLICIES ON ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Mr Runciman: My question is for the Premier. Earlier this week, I had a discussion with the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr Wrye) and he indicated to me that very shortly he would be making some announcements with respect to changes in Ontario's liquor laws. I have had some concern expressed to my office in the past few days that one of those recommendations that is going to be adopted by this government is the proposal called "bring your own booze" in the so-called Offer report, which would allow patrons to take bottles of wine into restaurants in the province.

Can the Premier assure the people of this province that he is not going to support that

recommendation and that we will not see that implemented?

Hon Mr Peterson: I can assure the member that I will take his concerns to the minister, and at the appropriate time he will bring his views forward to this House and the member can discuss them with him.

Mr Runciman: I think most of the people in this House, and certainly across the province, would be interested in hearing the Premier's views with respect to this issue. There are a number of other changes as well that are proposed by the Offer report, which apparently are going to be announced in the next couple of weeks.

Another one is the extension of drinking hours. We have talked to a group called PRIDE, People To Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere, and they have expressed a great deal of concern about that particular proposal. I quote John Bates of PRIDE, "If you're drunk at one o'clock, you'll be drunker at two o'clock." He has also expressed concern that with subways and transit systems shutting down at one o'clock, such an extension of drinking hours would force more people to drive in an impaired condition.

Does the Premier wish to comment on that proposal, and as well on the BYOB proposal?

Hon Mr Peterson: No, I do not.

Mr Runciman: The Premier did not mind a couple of weeks ago when he was asked about casinos in Ontario. He said he was not supportive of casinos because they did not lead to a good lifestyle, but today he is unwilling to comment on people wandering around the streets with bottles of wine or on extended drinking hours.

It is truly bizarre that at the same time this government is spending close to \$3 billion on health care costs related to alcohol abuse, thousands of dollars on advertising to promote good lifestyles and more than \$550 million on law enforcement related to alcohol problems, the Premier of this province does not even want to comment on the proposals that are going to be before his cabinet in a week or two, announcements that are forthcoming.

The Speaker: Question?

Mr Runciman: Why does he not open up to this House and the people of this province and tell us where he stands on these matters?

Hon Mr Peterson: Boy, this keeps getting worse every day, does it not? I thought it had hit bottom yesterday.

Look, I understand the problem. Let me just say that my honourable friend asked me if I

would like to comment and the answer was no; but now he has asked me a question that I think is a question I think we will—

Mr Runciman: This is a serious matter to an awful lot of people.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Peterson: The member is quite right. We take the views of the honourable member seriously, even if he has different views on the same subject two days in a row. I will certainly take his views to the minister. When the minister brings forward the policy of the government, he will share it with the member and then he can stand in this House and hoot and holler, rant and rail and say whatever he would like.

1410

PENSION FUNDS

Mr D. S. Cooke: I have a question of the Minister of Financial Institutions. The minister will no doubt be aware of the decision that was made yesterday by Mr Justice Sydney Robins regarding the Ontario Hydro pension plan and his ruling that Ontario Hydro could not take a contribution holiday because it has a surplus in its pension.

In particular, Mr Justice Robins said: "I can see no realistic distinction in the treatment of surplus between the corporation giving itself an accounting credit in place of actual payment of its required contribution and the corporation directly withdrawing surplus from the fund. The result is the same in both cases: the fund's surplus is reduced or eliminated." Does the minister agree with the ruling and with that statement yesterday?

Hon Mr Elston: I have seen part of the ruling given by Mr Justice Robins. I have not read the entire ruling. What I do understand is that Mr Justice Robins's decision was based particularly upon the statutory obligations of Hydro, at least from a preliminary review of the matter I have had, and, in fact, there are some questions outstanding in the minds of the parties as to whether there may be appeals taken from it.

With respect to my agreement or disagreement, I can tell the honourable gentleman I have seen it, I know what has been said and I know the matter of appeal is a question that is now being considered by the parties. I think the member is free to put his own turn on the decision of Mr Justice Robins at this point. It is not yet final, as far as I understand.

Mr D. S. Cooke: There is a principle involved in this and the minister knows it. The principle is

that pension contributions and pension funds belong to the workers and not to the corporation. If a surplus accrues, then that surplus belongs to the pension fund and the workers. All we are asking in this party, and thousands of employees across this province want to know, does the minister agree with that principle? If he agrees with that principle, why does he not put in place the regulations to stop the continued theft of millions of dollars of pension funds by contribution holidays in this province?

Hon Mr Elston: The honourable gentleman probably knows that, generally speaking, pension obligations are a part of contractual obligations which are worked out and, in fact, a number of decisions with respect to pension surplus have been decided, particularly on the wording of the contracts that surround the pension documents.

I can tell the honourable gentleman he is being much too general in the way he applies his particular analysis of that judgement. It has been, as I have been told from a very preliminary review of it, an indication of the particular bearing of the Power Corporation Act, which of course deals with Hydro.

The principle which the member has enunciated here is dealt with particularly in the text of pension agreements. In that situation, determinations are made and that is how, in fact, the determinations will be made by pension commissions and courts as the matters are dealt with in the years to come.

TORONTO AREA TRANSPORTATION

Mr Cousens: I have a question for the Minister of Transportation. His ministry has not faced up to the transportation crisis around Metropolitan Toronto. Metro's planning people have tabled proof positive how the traffic has become worse in and around the Metro area in the past year. Ontario truckers are calling it a crisis, saying the price of goods will jump by 25 per cent to 50 per cent in the next 10 years.

Since this government took office, the transportation budget for Ontario has steadily decreased. Is the minister following the same trend this year of reducing Ontario's financial commitment to transportation?

Hon Mr Fulton: As the member has demonstrated previously in this House, he once again has his facts incorrect. The budget of this ministry—

Mr Cousens: What facts do I have incorrect? Will the minister please tell me.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order, order. Shouting does not help anything. Does it? Oh.

Hon Mr Fulton: Obviously, the member wants to ask questions but does not want to hear the answers. The member would be very much aware, because of the interest he appears to have in transportation matters—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order, order.

Mr Cousens: On a point of personal privilege, Mr Speaker: He has no right to say that I appear to have; I have.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Many times I have noted in this House that members have risen and expressed a point of view. Not always do all members agree with that point of view. Does the minister have any further response?

Hon Mr Fulton: I will try again. I clearly understand that the member appears to have an interest in matters concerning transportation. He would be aware of the report of the directions we announced last May, and if he would care to listen to the answers, I have 11 pages of accomplishments that have flowed from that announcement of only a year ago, some of them including projects in his riding, I might point out.

I would further point out the inaccuracy of suggesting the budget has in fact decreased. It is simply not the case. The Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) and this government have been very generous with funding of this ministry. Municipal roads have grown by some 36 per cent. I would remind him that in the previous 11 years to this government taking office, his government continuously diminished the budget for this ministry.

Mr Cousens: Mr Speaker, on a point of personal privilege before I bring in my supplementary: As a member of this party, I am asking questions not only from the people of Markham in my riding, but for Liberals, Conservatives and NDP and people in the Metro area and people who are concerned with transportation. I take it as an offence that this minister should think I am not trying to serve all the people of the province, so I have a supplementary for him.

The Speaker: Does the member have a supplementary?

Mr Cousens: I am not taking any more of the Minister of Transportation's guff; it is just not worth it. He has a job to do and it is arrogance of the worst order.

The Minister of Transportation has lost the battle at cabinet for four years in a row to get increased funding. Metro last year received \$1.5 million less than the year before. Congestion is worse this year over last year. What we are seeing is that the percentage of the provincial budget in 1987-88 was 5.5 per cent and in 1988-89 it was down 0.1 per cent to 5.4 per cent.

Will the Minister of Transportation commit to this House that the transportation budget will not continue to decrease as a total share of provincial funding?

Hon Mr Fulton: I have said before, I said it today and I will say it again: The amount of funding to this ministry from our Treasurer in this government has grown substantially every year for four years. I suggest if he is reading from today's newspapers, the source of the information was indeed the deputy minister of this ministry under his government.

WETLANDS MANAGEMENT

Mr Owen: I have a question for the Minister of Natural Resources. In the early 1970s the Minesing Swamp land acquisition program was started. The swamp itself is a 15,000-acre natural wetlands system which lies in the very centre of the county of Simcoe.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority has acquired about 5,000 acres to date under this program; the Ministry of Natural Resources a little over 1,000 acres; the Ministry of Government Services 134 acres; and Simcoe county owns another 380 acres.

I am sure all of us recognize the unique animal and plant life which can be found within the swamp boundaries. My question to the minister is, can he advise us of what the overall plans are for this provincially significant acquisition program? Where are we going; what is contemplated?

1420

Hon Mr Kerrio: A very important initiative by this government that was motivated, in a way, to speed up the inventory of very important and valuable wetlands in the province was undertaken as one of the first initiatives of my ministry when I became minister, and it is a very significant and important one.

The member for Simcoe Centre talks about this particular area. Both my ministry and the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority are very much involved in management and acquisition of these lands to protect this very valuable swamp land. Representatives of both sit on a seven-member steering committee which deals

with the overall management and acquisition. The objective, of course, is to protect significant wetlands throughout the province.

As the member has described, acquisition has secured a major portion of the swamp. There are two large outstanding tracts left that we are negotiating for right now to put that whole package together. The features are very important to protect—Mr Speaker, I am sure you would want to hear this final comment that I have to make—that is, they include provincially significant floristic features, bird species that need to be protected and a significant pickerel spawning area, and everyone in the province enjoys the opportunities that presents.

The Speaker: There may be no need for a supplementary. Oh; okay, supplementary.

Mr Owen: While we are appreciative of what is being done to save the Minesing Swamp itself, there are other wetlands in the province, and from time to time we hear from conservation people who feel that the same programs that we have been experiencing and enjoying in the Simcoe county area should be shared with other parts of the province.

We all realize the importance of wetlands and what they do for our province. Could the minister tell us what is being done of comparable measure across the remaining part of the province compared to the Simcoe county area itself?

Hon Mr Kerrio: I thank the honourable member very much for a very important supplementary. I do feel that not only what we do as a government is important, but having attended last night at a fund-raising for the Brant Waterways Foundation to do good things to renew that waterway, which has a very great significance in and around the areas that the member for Brantford (Mr Neumann) represents, I would say that the acquisition has a very high priority to protect these lands and to continue to put out money with other users. My ministry, in conjunction with the ministries of the Environment, Municipal Affairs and Agriculture and Food, has released a paper on what we feel is an important and significant direction in protecting these very, very valuable resources, as they ultimately prove to be in Ontario.

There is another element that is worth mentioning, and that is, we get involved with a group that raises tremendous sums of money through Ducks Unlimited to protect wetlands, not only in Ontario but right across this continent and deep into the United States of America. There are many interested people doing good things to protect this valuable resource.

RENT REGULATION

Mr Breaugh: I have a question for the Minister of Housing concerning rent review in Ontario. Last November I raised with her a case of the application made at 1749 Victoria Park Avenue in Scarborough, indicating to her that the landlord in his application for a 65 per cent increase had been rather devious in terms of paying attention to the Rental Housing Protection Act and had incurred expenses which appeared questionable at that time. The minister, if I can quote her response, said not to worry. She did not say those words; she said that "there will be no unjustified rent increases."

The application was for a 65 per cent increase. The actual award made by the board on 13 April 1989 was for 62.29 per cent. Can the minister justify that for us?

Hon Ms Hošek: I thank the member for his continuing interest in rent review. He will know that four out of five of the tenants in this province receive rent increases at or near the guideline and that about three million tenants in the province are protected by rent review.

I think the member chooses not to remember that without the law that we currently have, a significant number of tenants in the province would face rent increases of any magnitude at any time a landlord saw fit to bring them forward. The tenants and the landlords in this province came together and attempted to strike a fair balance in this law, and there is no question that the legislation is a balance which gives benefit both to landlords and to tenants.

Let me give the honourable member an example of the kind of expenses that are calculated into a rent increase. There is a 30-unit building on Heath Street in Toronto, and the repairs in that building, which were considered legitimate in the process, went something like this. The boiler needed to be replaced; that cost \$31,000. The plumbing needed to be fixed; that cost \$28,000. The aluminum storms and windows needed replacement; that cost \$50,000. The kitchen cabinets needed replacing; that cost \$35,000. A new roof, \$26,000. Removing a wall, \$30,000. Expenses of this sort are involved in maintaining and keeping a building up to a standard and level that are calculated in the rent review increases. That is one example.

Mr Breaugh: I do not know whether that justifies anything to anybody. Let me try this one. In the minister's riding a woman named Joyce Hall lives in a building at 1065 Eglinton Avenue West. The application there is the

world's record. The landlord has applied for a 195 per cent increase in rent.

Joyce and others who live in that building are fearful, having seen what rent review will do. Can the minister explain to her why she should not now join other tenants in the building who were afraid that the increase will be something in that order and have left the building because they were afraid of what retroactive rents might be charged to them? How do you explain that to her, that this is really nothing more than a form of economic eviction, with her fear that the rent review process, if it does not give the landlord 195 per cent, will be justified in the way the minister has just done, to give him something of that order?

Hon Ms Hošek: It is too soon to know what rent increase will come in that building, but let me remind the member that the system was created to set fair rents. It was not meant necessarily to keep the status quo or to preserve rents that were cheap. It was meant to set fair rents and to keep a balance between very real protection for tenants and recognizing the expenses that are involved in maintaining and fixing a building over time.

I understand the concerns and the fears of people who are facing significant rent increases. The other issue that always has to be on the table at the same time is that unless we have a law which recognizes what it genuinely costs to keep a building and to fix it, we are not going to have the kind of rental housing stock we need in this province for the three million people who are tenants.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

Mrs Marland: My question is to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons. In June 1988 the Lord report was completed and forwarded to the office of the minister. Eight months later, on 27 February 1989, he finally decided to release the report to the public.

My question is, now that the minister has had almost a year to review this scathing report of services for the disabled in Ontario, can he tell the House and the disabled community what changes he plans to implement, and when?

Hon Mr Mancini: I want to thank the member for a very important question on the Lord report. As she has already explained to the House, the report is now public. It has been public for the last couple of months.

The regional offices of the Ministry of Community and Social Services now have the report. They are poring over it and may, in fact,

have some type of consultation through the regional offices. I have spoken personally to the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr Sweeney). We have discussed the Lord report in detail. There are a number of interesting proposals which have been made, and we wish to consider the matter further.

Mrs Marland: The Lord report says most people are frustrated with receiving their support from two or three different agencies with different regulations. Lack of co-ordination among agencies causes fragmentation and duplication. There is consumer dissatisfaction with the quality and reliability of service provided by outside agencies. There is recognition within many sectors that a more coherent legislative base is needed to support the philosophy and framework for the delivery of support services.

The fact is that we could hire more consultants and we could do more studies and more paperwork, but the minister's job is not just to produce paper; it is to act upon the advice that he has already called for and in fact paid for. I would like to know what the minister is going to do to address this one specific issue of the many issues raised in this report.

1430

Hon Mr Mancini: The report does in fact say everything that the honourable member quoted. I wish to repeat that I have already had consultation with the Minister of Community and Social Services, and we are going to consult further on the matter.

There are a number of important issues that have been described in the Lord report. Disabled persons want to decide for themselves how they should receive some of the services. Right now some of their services or most of their services are delivered through brokers, as the honourable member informed the House, and through agencies.

There is some overlap, but in order to make the serious changes to the system that the honourable member wishes to have made and most of us wish to have made, it does indeed take some amount of time. I want to let the honourable member know that her concern does not go unnoticed and her references today in the House to the Lord report are taken most seriously. As we continue to consult and hopefully work to an end to make very positive changes, she will be one of the first to know.

AGRICULTURAL POLICIES

Mr Tatham: My question is for the Minister of Agriculture and Food. We hear about hun-

dreds of millions of dollars in subsidies being supplied by European and American taxpayers to their agricultural communities. Can the Minister of Agriculture and Food indicate his position on the recent agreement on agriculture in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade negotiations?

Hon Mr Riddell: This is an issue that my ministry has been dealing with to come up with a reasonable long-term response. But let me preface my remarks by saying that I certainly do support the long-term goals of trade liberalization and improvements in the rules and discipline of GATT. For many of Ontario's agriculture and food commodities, reductions in trade-distorting subsidies will assist both our farmers and our food processors.

However, I do find the April agreement to be somewhat unbalanced. At present, there seem to be constraints only on domestic agricultural policies with minimal if any benefit from the freeze on support prices. Moreover, I do not see the need to discipline those commodities which are already supply-controlled.

With this lack of balance and the limited consultation that there has been with the producers and provinces, I along with my provincial colleagues have arranged a meeting with Mr Mazankowski on 12 May because we must clarify the mixed messages that are coming from Ottawa or risk disrupting these segments of our industry.

Mr Tatham: There are over 600 top-quality dairy producers in Oxford county. The minister referred to mixed messages and the role of supply management. Can the minister state his views on the supply management system in the GATT negotiations?

Hon Mr Riddell: The honourable member has raised a very serious concern in Canadian agricultural policy. It seems that many observers have viewed supply management and trade liberalization as incompatible. I do not share this view. I am pleased to note that Canada's negotiating position emphasizes the difference between our supply management systems and the open-ended, trade-distorting support systems of the United States and the European Community.

Indeed, I re-emphasize my support for effective supply management systems. When my colleague the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr Kwinter) and I met with the boards in late April, our comments reassured these commodity groups of the province's support for orderly marketing. As a matter of fact, after that meeting took place I received a

letter from John Core, who was the vice-chairman of the Milk Marketing Board, regarding the outcome of our meeting. I just want to quote what he said, very briefly:

"I appreciated the strong reaffirmation of your government's support for supply management when we met with you and Mr Kwinter on"—

The Speaker: Thank you. New question, the member for Hamilton West.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr Allen: I have a question to the Minister of Community and Social Services. At a time when the Premier (Mr Peterson) and the government are trumpeting the slogan "Welfare Cheques into Paycheques," the social assistance system itself appears to be creating undue hardship for the working poor and forcing them to give up paycheques for welfare cheques.

Sharleen and Claude Girouard, the Ottawa disabled couple whose case the minister knows well, have tried every route, both in and out of the system, in order to get their medical supply costs covered without his having to give up his job and go on family benefits where he could get disability benefits and a drug card. They are unfortunately about to do that.

Does the minister not agree that it would be less costly, as the Social Assistance Review Committee report proposed, simply to provide them and working poor like them with the benefits which would enable them to maintain their employment and self-respect? If he does, why does he not take the simple route and do it?

Hon Mr Sweeney: At the present time, the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) is reviewing the whole operation of who should qualify for assistance under the drug card program strictly from a health, a medical point of view. The member is also well aware of the fact that the Social Assistance Review report is currently in the works.

I would hope that roughly 13 days from now the member might get some information that would be helpful to him, as we certainly are looking at people who are in a transitional stage, who have been on income support and who now are not on income support. The critical issue—and the member and I have discussed this before—is that qualification based upon need takes in the financial resources of the entire family. Until we can make some adaptation to that, quite frankly, I am just not in a position to do what he asks.

Mr Allen: We have been through this route before. The minister has claimed that supplementary aid would help, and yet it does not cover

the \$200 outstanding in their budget at the end of the month that is caused by medical supply costs. The minister has had the option of going the route of an order in council and putting them on a \$2.50 allowance which would entitle them to a drug card; he has not done that.

I have not seen anything in the throne speech to date that indicates there is going to be any action with respect to the needs of the working poor, either in terms of minimum wage increases or benefits such as dental benefits, drug card attachment and so on. I would like the minister to stand and tell us whether he is going to be moving in that direction, because that would certainly solve the problem for the Girouards.

The Speaker: Minister.

Mr Allen: In the meantime, he has had options to act on this one—

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Allen: —and I wonder why he has not done it.

Hon Mr Sweeney: Let's remember, as the honourable member well knows and as I have indicated before, that a significant amount of money flows from this ministry through the municipal welfare offices to this particular family, significant numbers of dollars. The decision was made that the difference between what they get through supplementary aid through the local municipality—and the member knows that the provincial ministry pays 80 per cent of that—and what is still owing was deemed by that office to be within their capability to pay, given all the other resources available to them. So let's not leave the impression that they are not getting assistance for those medical bills. They are getting very, very significant assistance.

ORILLIA SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Mr McLean: My question is for the Minister of Health. It is my understanding that the officials from her ministry met the executive director of the Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital in late March to review a proposal to build a second campus for acute care and renovate the existing facility for chronic care. This is a proposal she has known about for a long time. This is a proposal that has raised almost \$7 million. The fund-raising drive shows the community's commitment to the project. Will the minister show her commitment by telling the hospital board of directors if construction can begin?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I have no announcement at this time.

Mr McLean: The hospital fund is over the top, and I think it shows a very strong commitment within the community with regard to the funding for that hospital. Some time ago, back in November, I asked the minister very much the same question. It was in March 1988 that she indicated she would have an answer within about two weeks. This is now 1989. When could we look forward to an answer?

Hon Mrs Caplan: As the member opposite knows, all capital projects have been under review to ensure in fact that we are planning for the future and community needs. He knows as well that we are looking at planning on a regional basis. I would say to him that I have no announcement to make today; however, in future we will be discussing the capital planning process in this Legislature and elsewhere.

1440

YOUTH GANGS

Mr Faubert: My question is to the Solicitor General. Youth gang activity in Metropolitan Toronto has been gaining more attention in the media. It seems that incidents have been reported almost daily, detailing such activities as swarming, shoplifting and assault.

Residents in my riding of Scarborough-Ellesmere, in which the Scarborough Town Centre is located, have expressed to me their concerns about the problem; some have even indicated their concern about going shopping alone. Indeed, shop owners are speaking about the possibility of lost business. Mothers in Scarborough have formed a group to combat youth gang participation in Scarborough.

Can the minister advise the House what has been done to date and what is currently being done to deal with the problem of youth gangs in Metropolitan Toronto?

Hon Mrs Smith: I think it is very important that we keep in mind that school and police authorities by and large do not consider that most of the young people in Toronto who gather together in our malls are gangs. No one is denying that there are some organized gangs out on the streets of Toronto, Scarborough and the various areas round about; but by and large, in getting together, the groups that form loosely, which often have too much time on their hands and not enough to do, tend to get a group psychology.

A great deal is being done, particularly by the schools in the Metro area and I would say as well

by the Metro police force. They have formed special task forces to deal with this and feel they are making very good progress and indeed are getting quite on top of the problem.

Mr Faubert: Last September in this Legislature, I called for a Metro-wide review of gang activity. The problem of youth gangs crosses many jurisdictions. Indeed, the Metropolitan Toronto Police has formed a squad called a youth gang squad. I know they would rather call them posses or swarms or other names, but they are involved in gang activity. As well, we know that any solutions certainly might cross the boundaries of many ministerial jurisdictions if they are recommended.

I understand Metropolitan Toronto council has formed a Metro task force under the community services and housing committee. I would like to address the question to the minister. Would she consider participating in such a task force to ensure that alternatives involving areas of provincial jurisdiction could be adequately addressed?

Hon Mrs Smith: We do participate very closely with Metro in any way that can be useful. We have people attend their meetings and offer assistance to them in whatever ways are appropriate for our ministry to assist. The task forces are being successful.

I have met in my office with social workers who work on the streets with kids and local residents, to get their creative ideas on how we as a ministry might assist the various police forces in working in these areas. We will be happy to work with them. We seek advice from them and from others as to what we can do to assist.

RAIL SERVICES

Mr Morin-Strom: I have a question for the Minister of Northern Development with respect to rail transportation services in northeastern Ontario.

We know that the federal government is cutting back considerably in terms of funding to Via Rail and, at the same time, the minister is currently looking at cutbacks in services to the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission in terms of its services along the Highway 11 corridor. Currently, the ministry and ONTC are conducting surveys and a series of public hearings in communities in that area of northeastern Ontario with respect to the passenger train services that the province has been funding in that area.

Can the minister, who has never reported on this study or set of hearings to the House itself,

tell us what the purpose of it is and what his objective is with respect to rail transportation services for that area of our province?

Hon Mr Fontaine: First of all, I would like to say that the ONTC decided to have this review for many reasons. First of all—

Mr Runciman: Is that a mirror you have in front of you?

Hon Mr Fontaine: No. This is a committee which is composed of northerners. We are looking at that service. I do not know where the member for Sault Ste Marie gets this idea that we want to eliminate the service. That was never mentioned.

Second, I take the train quite often. I do not know if the member ever took that train from Kapuskasing to Toronto. I have used it quite often for many years. I know there are some problems with the service and the way they serve the people too. That is what the committee will do. We are going to discuss with the population of this corridor to see what kind of service and what quality of service is wanted. After that, they will report to me and I will make my report here, and we will decide at that time.

Mr Morin-Strom: The hearings are being set up and held across northeastern Ontario. As has been reported publicly, their objective will be "to consider if cheaper, reduced service could be provided, since existing service is experiencing high cost due to lack of use."

Currently, the communities in this area are getting twice-a-day rail passenger services. At the same time that Via Rail is threatening to cut back services, can the minister at least give us the assurance that these communities will continue to have twice-a-day services through the services of the ONTC and that in fact the only thing we will see is improved service, not reductions in service to that area of northeastern Ontario?

Hon Mr Fontaine: First of all, I want to remind the member for Sault Ste Marie that we are not Via; we are ONTC. From Kapuskasing to Cochrane, that is Via and then we take over, but Via owns that train.

Second, I cannot speak for Via, but we are asking this committee to look at the situation of passenger service between Kapuskasing and Toronto. At the same time, I want to remind the member that if it takes two hours between Kapuskasing and Cochrane by train, something is wrong. That is what we want to look at. The train goes about 20 miles per hour. That is not my fault. That is the CN's or Via's fault. Our track from Cochrane is not that bad. I would like the

member to take the train for a while and look at the situation. Maybe he could discuss it more reasonable. C'est tout.

INSURANCE COMPANY BANKRUPTCY

Mr Runciman: I have a question to the Minister of Financial Institutions, and it has to do with the Guardall bankruptcy. I would like to know a number of things, since I am only going to have one question opportunity here.

In view of the fact that Seymour Ravinsky, the owner of Guardall and Ontario General Insurance Co, declared personal bankruptcy in 1977, I would like to know why this individual was allowed to purchase Ontario General Insurance in the first place; and why Ontario did not order Guardall to stop selling contracts until late March, when it had suspended the insurance company's licence in early February.

Hon Mr Elston: I will have to look at what the rationale was for allowing Mr Ravinsky to purchase the insurance company. I understand that questions of transactions like that really take a look at the ability of the company to carry on business.

I do know in relation to Guardall that it did not only contract to provide the service through the one insurance company. There are other companies which in fact are involved, and that probably has something to do with the timing.

The issue in its entirety, from a consumer's point of view and otherwise, is currently being investigated by my colleague the honourable member for Windsor-Sandwich, Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr Wrye) and his ministry, in addition to the work that is ongoing with respect to the insurance company through my division. I will consult with him as well to tell the member as much as I can in one answer.

1450

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

Mr Kormos: I am rising pursuant to standing order 30(b) and giving notice that I am not satisfied with the response given to my question by the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr Elston) and that I intend to raise the subject matter of that question upon adjournment of the House today.

The Speaker: I am sure the member will give written notice as well.

PETITIONS

RECYCLING

Mr Ferraro: Mr Speaker, I am very proud and pleased today to present a petition to you and the

House that was organized by a newspaper in the city of Guelph, the Royal Tribune.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We want to see Bell Canada encouraged to act immediately so that we can recycle our phone directories."

It is signed by 1,584 of my constituents, including a group of wonderful kids from Paisley Road School and just about the entire University of Guelph. I have affixed my name to it along with my staff.

WATER RESOURCES

Mr McGuigan: I have a petition:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas the yearly average rainfall in the riding of Essex-Kent is 28 inches, four to six inches short of the optimum for our average temperature and length of frost-free season;

"Whereas the land is very flat and close to the water level of the surrounding rivers and lakes;

"Whereas there is considerable interest on the part of agricultural producers in the practice of supplemental irrigation, therefore, be it resolved to petition the Ontario Legislature to call on the government of Ontario to investigate the possibility of providing assured water supplies from the municipal drains, rivers and lakes of the area; to identify those areas which could be supplied with assured water supplies; to identify the soils within the supplied areas that could be subirrigated; and to develop legislation that would provide a framework for fairly and assuredly allocating water supplies to the various classes of uses among irrigators;

"Be it further resolved that a body of information be assembled from the various laws governing water usage and be made available in a single source for the use of potential irrigators;

"Furthermore, that one of the several ministries involved, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the Ministry of Natural Resources and others, be designated as the lead ministry to deal with this emerging technology."

I have signed it.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr Charlton: "To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We urge the Liberal government not to proceed with Bill 162, An Act to amend the Workers' Compensation Act, Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1980, chapter 539 as amended by Statutes of Ontario, 1981, chapter 30; Statutes of Ontario, 1982, chapter 61; Statutes of Ontario, 1983, chapter 45; Statutes of Ontario, 1984, chapter 38; Statutes of Ontario, 1984, chapter 58; Statutes of Ontario, 1985, chapter 3; Statutes of Ontario, 1985, chapter 17; and Statutes of Ontario, 1986, chapter 64, section 69."

This petition is signed by a number of residents of various locations in the province. I will add my signature to it.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Mr Morin-Strom: I have a petition signed by over 400 residents of Sault Ste. Marie. It reads as follows:

"To the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and in particular the Minister of Community and Social Services:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Once again the Ontario government is directly responsible for a tragic murder of a young woman as a result of the inept system of service delivery to adult and young offenders. The policy of contracting out and privatization of facilities has given the citizens of Ontario a haphazard network of services which Celia Ruygrok and Krista Sepp have paid for with their lives!

"To operate within restrictive budgets, private operators hire inexperienced staff at the minimum wage. They can't afford to train staff and must schedule staff to work alone. People working alone cannot guarantee the safety of the residents, the safety of the members of the community or their own safety.

"Therefore, we the undersigned demand that the government of Ontario ensure that all private publicly funded agencies dealing with adult and young offenders be staffed appropriately."

I have affixed my name to it and I present it for the government's serious consideration.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1989

Mr Fleet moved first reading of Bill 6, An Act to amend certain Statutes to create Heritage Day and Civic Holiday as Public Holidays.

Motion agreed to.

Mr Fleet: A public holiday to celebrate our heritage is an idea whose time has come. This bill proposes a public holiday, Heritage Day, on the third Monday of February, which is the start of Ontario's annual Heritage Week.

The bill also proposes a public holiday on the first Monday of August, Civic Holiday. Currently, the Civic Holiday is not universally a legal right. It is only available to employees through collective agreements, the Public Service Act or subject to municipal proclamation or bylaw.

In the words of a draft paper of the Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues, "Public holidays are a basic"—

The Speaker: Order. It is certainly in order to explain the bill, but not to debate it.

HERITAGE DAY ACT, 1989

Mr McLean moved first reading of Bill 7, An Act respecting Heritage Day.

Motion agreed to.

Mr McLean: The purpose of this bill is to name the third Monday in the month of February Heritage Day and to designate this day as a holiday in Ontario. Previously, I brought in some bills with regard to Simcoe Day and some of my colleagues had indicated they would support Heritage Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the amendment to the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

The Speaker: The member for Mississauga North adjourned the debate. Any further comments?

Mr Offer: I do have some further comments in dealing with this speech from the throne. As I recall, yesterday I indicated that this throne speech is a concerted, focused speech dealing with the priorities of this government in the upcoming session and I indicated those priorities, as recited in the throne speech, as being:

"1. Building on our economic strengths to ensure tomorrow's growth;

"2. Investing in the future of our children by making our education system a more effective springboard to opportunity;

"3. Reforming social assistance to help people move from dependence to self-reliance;

"4. Keeping our communities and neighbourhoods safe and secure;

"5. Promoting healthy lifestyles and preserving quality health care;

"6. Providing leadership in environmental protection."

Yesterday, I dealt at some length with priority number one, building on our economic strength, by indicating that there is a challenge being given to this province, an opportunity because of the strength of this province through its large manufacturing base, through the skills, ability, willpower and willingness of our workforce to compete in a global economy, and that it is important this government make it a very high priority to lead the way, to provide the pathway for our manufacturing base and our workforce to be able to meet that challenge.

1500

The work of the Premier's Council on the economy, the record of this government, is such that we are leading, we are building that path so that this province will be a leader and will be able to compete, not only within this country but outside, in a technologically demanding workforce and workplace. As such, this will provide direct and indirect benefit to many persons throughout this province.

If I might, I would like to deal with one other matter brought forward in this throne speech; that is, reforming social assistance to help people move from dependence to self-reliance. I believe that when we talk about this particular aspect of the throne speech, it is important it is indicated as a priority. As we meet these challenges of a technologically demanding society, we must as a caring province realize that there is a prosperity which is not shared by all, that there are those less fortunate, caught up in a type of poverty, caught up in a vortex almost, with no escape.

Last session, this government continued to combat poverty in this province by providing substantial increases in benefits for social assistance programs. We introduced measures to reduce homelessness and increased funding for shelter subsidies.

I have taken note how this government, under the leadership of the Premier (Mr Peterson) and under the leadership of the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr Sweeney), has shown itself, and they have shown themselves, to be at once ready to move on these very important issues and to be caring and understanding. That has been converted into programs, programs of substance, programs that meet real needs in a real way.

I note that since 1985 the accomplishments in the area of social assistance alone have been in excess of \$300 million. There have been not only general rate increases in general welfare and family benefits, but there have been special increases for children, special extensions in terms of children's winter clothing, extensions that are concrete, positive, necessary and ongoing.

There has also been a move by this government, and I know it has already been discussed, in terms of the appointment of the independent public review under George Thomson in July 1986. That particular appointment and that particular review resulted in the visiting of 14 communities for public hearings, in 1,500 briefs and submissions received, resulting in a blueprint for reform.

It shows a commitment and a determination on the part of this government, this Premier and the Minister of Community and Social Services that it is not sufficient only to increase the dollar amount of these programs to meet particular needs, but it is also necessary to take a look at the whole framework to make certain that the framework itself from which these programs are derived is such that it will move people from welfare cheques to paycheques.

I think it is almost trite to say that we as members meet daily with persons in need, persons who require assistance, persons who want assistance to move out of the cycle they find themselves in—the single parents with children who want to better themselves, who want to be able to have the opportunity of training, of getting out and competing in the workforce. That is what this type of examination is about.

It is important that in a throne speech we take a look to see if that is on the government's agenda. I see that is the third item. It says, "Reforming social assistance to help people move from dependence to self-reliance." That is meeting a fundamental need in terms of the framework as to how people will be able to move from such assistance to help themselves.

There has also been the move in terms of an expansion of employment programs for social assistance recipients. This third very large activity of this government represents a new era of federal and provincial co-operation with respect to employment programs for social assistance recipients.

This session, we as a government are going to address and attack these issues through continued reform, because we must continue to meet the needs of those who are unable to be self-

sufficient. We must realize, and this government does, and it is evidenced through this throne speech, that there is that need to take a look at the structure whereby people can move from assistance to their own self-determination. They are ready, those people are able and it is the necessity and the obligation of government to provide the way.

We have to continue to move forward in terms of increased payments for shelter support to persons on social assistance. We have to remove the barriers that serve as disincentives to work. We must expand the network of employment counselling, referral, basic training and job preparation programs. We must increase children's benefits. This government, through this throne speech and through its history and its record, is prepared to do just that.

I think we have the wealth and the creativity in this province to prevent the unfortunate hardships imposed by what is becoming an increasingly economically divided society. This throne speech and the priorities put on this issue by this government surely lead the way in making this a province that continues to be caring, compassionate and understanding.

There is a priority indicated in this throne speech about keeping our communities and neighbourhoods safe and secure. I guess not a day goes by but we do not hear something through the media about some occurrence, some incident, some form of violence. It is not just an inner city type of incident; it is something that affects all persons in this province in terms of the growing impact of drugs on our youth.

Last session, there was the task force chaired by the member for Muskoka-Georgian Bay (Mr Black). That was a task force of one person who travelled the province and made recommendations that were applauded across the province as serving as a blueprint for this government. I am very proud to have the member as a colleague because of the work he has done and the important, fundamental improvements he is really leading in terms of this very important issue.

1510

This session, we as a government remain committed to building on a comprehensive antidrug strategy. We are going to do that through education and prevention programs which will include antidrug education in primary and secondary schools, and community-based programs in what may be deemed high-risk neighbourhoods.

We have to have a wider range of treatment programs, including employee assistance programs. We also must expand our drug enforcement capacity, including a strengthened Ontario Provincial Police drug enforcement unit. There are many things that can be done in terms of making our communities and neighbourhoods safe and secure.

The work done by the member for Muskoka-Georgian Bay and the taking up of that work by this government are going to go far in providing the safety and security that the people of this province not only need but deserve.

I could not leave this particular topic without dealing with the issue of court reform. There has not been a fundamental court reform in this province for over 100 years. It was just at the beginning of this week that the Attorney General (Mr Scott) announced far-reaching court reform legislation.

As I have indicated, we have not had an overhaul of the court system since 1881 in this province. There have been, of course, ad hoc modifications, but major reform has not occurred for over 100 years. I must say that the response I have been getting in my riding of Mississauga North and indeed the response I have been reading through the Mississauga newspaper, which has gone out and canvassed persons on the street, has been: "Yes, we do need court reform. Yes, we do applaud the work of this government and the Attorney General of this province, because this government is embarking on a historic and significant task, because it is a total revision of our judicial court system, the ultimate goal of which is to create a system that is more accessible and efficient."

The Attorney General, through his vision, has proposed a unified, one-level trial court which we call the Ontario Court of Justice. We know the benefits of a unified, single-level trial court are many in terms of accessibility to more people in this province, in terms of flexibility in how these court systems are run and in terms of an understanding for all those who have to use such a court system.

The court system in this province serves the people of Ontario. That is what it is there to do. That is its reason for existence. In keeping with the goal of court reform, which is the creation of a more effective and accessible system, this government has increased the maximum amount for an action in small claims court in Toronto from \$3,000 to \$5,000, and outside of Toronto from \$1,000 to \$5,000, so there will be a level across the province of \$5,000.

This will provide a greater accessibility to what is a more expeditious and in many ways inexpensive way and means by which disputes may be resolved. This will serve the people of this province from east to west and north to south in a very fundamental and real way.

I personally feel confident about the success of this undertaking. I realize it is large—it is extremely large—but I feel confident because ultimately the public interest will be better served. When the public interest is better served, I think we will get the support from the opposition party and the third party and the support and co-operation from the federal government that are so necessary. We can settle for nothing less if the justice system is to continue to have the respect and confidence of the people.

In terms of court reform, we must all always bear in mind that the purpose of the total court reform vision is to advance and improve the administration of justice and provide the best possible trial court structure for the people of this province.

This throne speech carries with it six priorities, six items which are issues of importance, six areas where this government is proceeding to move to build upon its strength and to build upon its record, which will be a benefit to all persons in this province.

I am proud of the leadership shown by the Premier and by the cabinet. I am proud of being part of a caucus which is going to move forward in all of these areas to make certain that this province provides on one hand the opportunity for all, and on the other hand provides assistance for those who need it, and provides an opportunity for those who need assistance not only to receive that assistance, but also to receive training and education to be able to go out and do what they can do best.

That is a responsibility and an obligation of this government and it should be such. In closing, I look forward to carrying forward the initiatives in this throne speech. I look forward to carrying forward this clear, precise and focused agenda of this government in the session ahead.

Mr Allen: It is a pleasure to rise and address the issues raised by the throne speech presented by the government a week ago. The lack of comment upon the last speaker's remarks may not reflect so much upon the speaker as the relative emptiness of the throne speech which he was speaking to.

In stage after stage in this address from the throne, we find an unusual degree of contradiction. One finds, for example, a great deal of

reference to continuing to pursue the high-technology initiatives of this government at a time when we are losing firms like Lumonics Inc. to Japanese buyers, just as we lost the initiatives of a major research group at the University of Waterloo in the field of advanced artificial intelligence and lost the development of computers to another Japanese research group a couple of years ago.

We look at educational proposals that propose to expand the space needs and demands on the system, and at the same time the government has cut back its capital funding limits to the school systems in question. One looks at proposals, for example, for increasing specialization in grades 10 to 12 in fields like math, science and technology at a time when there is no possible way of implementing that in terms of the teaching cadre that is available. There are massive shortages in each of those fields of instruction.

One moves into rather vague and generalized words on safe and secure communities and equally vague words on healthy lifestyles and preserving the quality of life and quality of health care in the province at a time when, for example, at recent hearings on one of the major health problems—perhaps the major health problem in the country, certainly with respect to the measurable deaths that follow from it; namely, the problem of tobacco use and more particularly tobacco use in the workplace—all of the health professionals who came before us rejected the government's legislation, yet the government was not prepared to amend it in any consequential way.

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We, of course, end up with a continuing leadership in environmental protection which proposes to fund environmental protection on the basis of a lottery called Cleantario. As I observed in one of my reactions in the media, it was something like spreading moral pollution to cope with environmental pollution and is certainly not an adequate way of funding basic governmental programs.

I do not so much, however, want to spend my time going through all aspects of this throne speech; I want to focus my remarks rather more than that. But before I do that, I want also to note that in my own field of social services and the office for the disabled, for which I am the critic, I note no remarks whatsoever and no proposals that apparently this government feels necessary to advance to priority stage with respect to the disabled in this province. That is a very unsettling absence from this document.

Having rehearsed very carefully with the minister in charge of the Office for Disabled Persons not long ago the many outstanding areas in which there is urgent need of action on behalf of the people with the various disability afflictions in this province, I find it strange that none of those programs and none of those issues have found their way into the throne speech. It suggests to me that perhaps the advocacy function that the minister and that office are supposed to perform for the government, in fact, is not being very effectively undertaken. Notwithstanding the energy that the minister himself, I am sure, tries to pour into that, his own government has not been listening and the people who are disabled, the disability community in this province, clearly have not been heard.

I would also observe that many pressing issues that we confronted in the course of the last session in the field of social services remain entirely unaddressed, ones that one would suspect to have gained attention of the kind of priority that would have lofted those issues into a speech from the throne. I refer particularly, for example, to two of them.

One is the ongoing and very serious growing gap between the level of compensation provided by those who work in the agencies that are indirectly funded by the government and those who do the same jobs in agencies that are directly dependent upon the government and operated by and through the government. That gap, the gap between the transfer and the directly funded agencies, is a growing and serious one. The transfer agencies in question house individuals who work there and who often begin at below-poverty-level wages, at a time when we are supposed to be addressing the question of poverty in Ontario.

How a government squares that with its conscience I find difficult to understand. Yet it appears that in the transition towards more and more community-based programs in those areas and the movement of government out of the direct provision of those services, that seems to be the model; namely, that the lower-wage sector will prevail and, indeed, impoverished wages will prevail and the gap will disappear in that fashion. That is a very serious question.

The second is an even more urgent question. When the Red Cross and other homemaking organizations in the province told us that they could no longer survive, and that they were going to have to get out of the business within six months unless the government really did something about the accumulating deficits the organi-

zations faced—the government had already had a three-year-old study six months in its hands on how to deal with that issue—the response that was required was obvious. Funding was obviously the first thing that had to be done and some additional service provided in that sector, by way of training of homemakers and so on, in order to help professionalize the service somewhat more.

None the less, although by the time of the throne speech the government had in hand the report of the consulting agency that it sent out into the field to evaluate the homemaking services, there was still no response at the level of the throne speech in terms of how the government was going to respond to the crisis in homemaking in Ontario. I only have to remind members of the House that the provision of homemaking is the key element in community-based health care, the one approach that offers some relief from overcrowded nursing homes and from overcrowded chronic care wards in hospitals.

I could go on into other aspects of my particular critic areas which are absent from this document that was delivered from the Speaker's chair by His Honour the Lieutenant Governor on behalf of the government, but I want to spend my time on the question raised by the element of the throne speech that addresses the Social Assistance Review Committee's report, not in name, certainly, but in substance in terms of the section which is headed, "Social Assistance: Moving from Dependence to Self-reliance."

First of all, the government members have grown used to claiming credit for the establishment of this review committee, which evaluated the social assistance programs of this province. I want to remind the House that the real source of this document for the reform of the social assistance system that was tabled with us some eight months ago now came out of the work of my colleague the member for Scarborough West (Mr R. F. Johnston), who shortly after his election to this House some nine or 10 years ago embarked on a major campaign which was his preoccupying *forté* in this House; namely, the issue of poverty in Ontario.

He did his examination of poverty questions; he did his poverty tours; he produced his studies, like *The Other Ontario*, an examination of poverty in Ontario. He then produced a major evaluation of the system called *Changing the System*. Early in those years he of course gained some notoriety for his going on the welfare diet for a period of one month and lost a great many pounds in doing so.

Finally, about two years ago now, he stood in this House and he asked the government to institute, at long last, a major study of the problems which it knew by this time did exist in the system. After a month or six weeks, the government set up the committee that he asked for, the work got under way and the report was ultimately produced.

I want to note that on behalf of that document and the main thrust of its proposals, there is currently on the grounds of Queen's Park a vigil being held from now until the time of the delivery of the budget. People who are out there have come from a group called the Interfaith Social Assistance Review Committee, which represents 14 different faith groups in Ontario. They are there offering their prayers that the government of Ontario, the members of this Legislature, throughout this session will make the problem of the poor in Ontario and the implementation of the entire first stage, at least, of the Social Assistance Review Committee's report the first business of this Legislature.

They are still hopeful that after months of lobbying, the case will be heard. They are not convinced, as I am not convinced, that the items that are noted in the speech from the throne represent the full implementation of the first stage of the Thomson report's recommendations, let alone some additional proposals that those groups have wanted included in the first stage of reforms. I will note the most important of those is the request that the government make a major improvement in the minimum wage. I will make a further comment on the significance of that in relation to the elements that are set forward in the speech from the throne.

1530

Let me note, first of all, the grand design of the Thomson committee's report: the grand design is that you cannot reform social assistance in this province simply by dealing with the social assistance system in isolation from the larger problems of poverty and social support which are necessary in our system and which are not satisfactorily addressed by the economy itself; you cannot, in short, address the problems of social assistance without addressing the problems of the working poor.

We are told by this report and by others that there are over one million poor in Ontario, roughly half of them on the social assistance system and the other half working poor. We are told that of those poor the largest single group is children, some 360,000 of them, just as among those on social assistance the largest single group

is again children, some 37 per cent of the whole case load or over 200,000. We are told, in other words, that poverty in Ontario is a very, very significant ongoing fact.

You hear the statistics in a very unemotional kind of way, but when you do as I did recently and march with a group of antipoverty marchers through communities in Ontario, large and small, ranging in my case from Sudbury through to Parry Sound, from the other side of London through to Kitchener, from Bowmanville into Toronto, you begin to glimpse something of the scale of poverty and what it means for individuals and families around the province.

You begin to realize that the impression many people have, that this is essentially a problem of the high-cost economy of Toronto, is really not the case. It is a problem of the low-cost economies in tourist regions, it is a problem of the economies of small French-Canadian communities in the north, it is a problem of depressed rural regions such as the one the person inhabiting the Speaker's chair at the moment comes from.

In Prescott-Russell, I am told, the average income level is perhaps the lowest in the province on a per capita basis. It is a very severe situation which needs to be addressed. Similarly, in the Sharbot Lake area and parts of the Bruce county area it is the same thing. Even in the prosperous regions of western Ontario there are, on the back concessions and even on some of the main highways, farms that are not delivering their families adequate and appropriate support, and these families are numbered among the poor.

When you go into the native reserves of the north, as I did—I stayed two nights on two native reserves, the Magnetawan reserve and the Shawanaga reserve—the people there share the common lot of native people in this province, namely, 63 per cent of those over 15 years or 16 years of age have an annual income of less than \$5,000 a year. The rate of dependence on social assistance in the native community is nine times the provincial average.

You move into communities that you have supposed were prosperous. To a person who goes to Stratford, for example, to go to the Stratford Festival, it looks very prosperous. Then you get there, sit down and talk with people and are told: "In this community we don't like to acknowledge the poverty that is in the community. Yes, we have a couple of food banks and the poor are hidden away in the back streets and you don't see them when you are here as a tourist and as a

visitor." But it is there, it is real, it is hard and it is not livable for the people concerned.

You go into a tourist region like the Parry Sound-Muskoka region. What are the average income levels? The average person on a wage income in Parry Sound earns \$5 an hour. The average female in Muskoka earns \$8,000 a year, the average male in those regions \$13,000 a year. Yet if you ask what is happening to housing, for example, and land costs in the area, you are told, as you are told in all communities within 100 miles and 150 miles of Toronto, that housing and land prices are being driven up by the fact that people from Metro are eyeing the lower-cost properties and paying a handsome price for them. They are able to live there with the surplus from the sale of their original properties back in Toronto or Hamilton or Oshawa or in the higher-priced areas.

The people who are residents in those tourist regions and smaller towns east, west and north of Toronto are finding that the wage economy is not able to get them access to affordable housing any longer. When you are in Parry Sound and discover that one of the major facilities for low-cost housing is about to be torn down and there is no replacement in sight, you begin to realize the kind of pressure that individuals are under.

In other words, poverty is widespread in this province. It is not just confined to Metro Toronto, though it is severe here. Throughout this province, the conditions that have made for food banks in Toronto are making for food banks elsewhere. Government is, I am afraid, tending to rely more and more on those who provide those services to get it off the hook of the expanded commitment it should be making to social supports.

What the SARC report proposes is that you cannot move people out of the welfare trap, out of the poverty cycle, unless you do something about the working poor. The moment you tip people off the brink, if you like, of the social assistance system and they find themselves once more in the low-wage economy, as inevitably most of them end up, they discover that they cannot meet the costs, especially if they have any additional needs in the medical world, in the medical aspect of their lives, such as excessive dental costs. Anything that comes along that is extra immediately throws them back on to social assistance.

The Thomson report outlined a grand design, whereby it proposed to move through improving the benefit adequacy, simplifying the system and

moving towards income supplementation and child benefits, in order to provide across the board for the kind of family support system that would make it very, very difficult for people to have to resort in the end to social assistance and if they did, they would be well supported.

There are perhaps two essential things that alarm me about the speech from the throne with respect to the design the Thomson report laid out. The first is that nowhere in this speech from the throne is there mention of the name of George Thomson, of the SARC report or of the name Transitions, which attaches to the document, as though somehow the government were wanting to distance itself from the design of this particular proposal and ultimately from its costs.

Yet you have to underscore the fact that unless you follow the route that the Thomson design offers, there is no escape from the dilemmas and the difficulties that any social assistance system finds itself in. That is the first problem: Has the design been accepted by the government or not?

Nothing in this document tells us that the government is moving on the whole design or that it is committed, as the head of that committee, George Thomson, asked, to providing within six months some intention of its overall direction of response, where it would move, how it would move as a kind of overall commitment to the work that the committee had done. We have not seen that. We did not see it at the end of six months and we have not seen it at the end of eight months. We have not seen it in the throne speech, and quite frankly, I am afraid we will not see that either in the budget.

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The next question I address myself to is whether the government in the throne speech has in fact addressed the first stage of reforms. The first stage of reforms Thomson proposed were ones which had a spectrum of proposals; the spectrum of proposals was intended to address the various elements of the whole plan. It was intended to address the question of the adequacy of benefit levels, so that all persons would be considered in terms of their needs, that there would not be a categorization of people on to general welfare, for example, whose benefits are so much lower than those on family benefits, and those, in turn, less than someone else's, with the elaborate system of staging of who deserves more out of this system.

The whole question of just deserts was not raised by the Thomson commission other than to say, "Our examination of the issue tells us that all persons on social assistance are in need and

deservedly so. We need to respond to them in that term and that term only, and not in terms of the deserving poor and the undeserving poor formula." So the whole benefits question was to be addressed in the first stage of the Thomson report's reforms in those terms.

Then there was to be a major initiative with respect to removing work disincentives to employment which exist in the system. There was to be some attack upon an expansion of employability programs, and an improvement, as a first indication of the government's preparedness to move towards income supplementation, in the expansion of the work incentive program.

I note there was some additional concern that the government should move immediately, for example, at the level of medical and dental benefits for all low-income persons.

There was also some concern that the government, in addition to addressing the income level, the benefit level adequacy, would move also at the level of work and employability, in providing incentives, making some token recognition at least of the need to move towards income supplementation and of a need to provide benefits for the working poor.

Then there was to be some major movement in the direction of simplifying the system, providing more precise rules, which can be done through regulations rather than through legislation, and providing less discretion, eliminating the amount of discretion in the system so that people who are clients know where they stand in it.

There was to be a new disability determination process. There was to be improvement in case-load ratios, because one of the major problems in the system at the moment is the problem of service in the direct contact between client and social worker. The loads are so heavy that it is difficult not to deal with that in a very mechanical and impersonal way.

Then there was to be some response to the other major problem that is out there that affects especially rural municipalities and unconsolidated municipalities, namely, that there is a great variation in the delivery of social services across this province. There are some municipalities, for example, where the last month's rent will be paid and others where it will not be paid by the municipality as a way of helping the person on welfare secure accommodation.

You will find, for example, as we did on the march, that out in one of the communities, I think it was north of Belleville, one of the social

services administrators had prided himself on saving \$1.8 million for the ministry in the course of the past year. How had he done it? He simply used his discretionary power not to provide special needs to anybody, regardless of whether people qualified for them.

Across the province there is a very uneven delivery of social services. The Thomson report asks that in the first stage of reforms, there be a major response to that by developing standards and conditions for municipal delivery and making certain they are enforced, take place and are properly funded.

There were also indications in the first stage of reforms that the Thomson report wanted to see the government get off its backside on the question of literacy programs, where it has rested for the last two or three years after an initiative that the government made a great hullabaloo about out here with a big tent on the front lawn.

But things have settled down and not much that is very new or exciting or expansive is really happening on that front, as far as government funding and new initiatives are concerned. Yet that is critical to address in a massive way in order to provide the foundation for the employability programs and the employability capacities of people on the social assistance system.

Having outlined that first stage—and that is not all of the detail that the full document provides but only the summary of it—let me look at what is proposed in this throne speech. The throne speech, first of all, proposes increased payments for shelter support to persons on social assistance. That is all that the government says at this point in time with respect to the question of benefit adequacy.

Are they going to implement the first-stage increases that are outlined on page 106 in the summary document, for example, in particular for the single employable person who presently receives so much less on a personal basis than other persons in the social assistance system? A 22 per cent increase was required in order to bring them up even to near adequacy and there is no commitment to that kind of increase.

The observation in the report is that recipients should be reimbursed for 100 per cent of actual shelter costs up to the existing shelter subsidy ceilings, and actual utilities costs should be recognized in full. These shelter-related changes are the most costly of the reforms to be introduced at this stage, but they underline the urgency of doing that.

There is no indication that what is talked about here by increased payments for shelter support

will in fact reach that level of 100 per cent of actual shelter costs up to existing shelter subsidy ceilings. One can only conclude that the government did not want to commit itself to moving that far.

Then there are the two proposals which have to do with employability. The government does say it will remove barriers which serve as disincentives to work. One has to assume that what is referred to is at least one of the items in the first-stage reforms, namely, the proposal that the 120-hour rule limiting the monthly paid employment for sole-support parents be eliminated, so that those parents would be able to engage in employment that was more than part-time, more than low-wage and thus hasten their move off the welfare rolls.

That is not spelled out specifically, but apparently the government is going to move in some such direction. That, taken together with the expansion of the network of employment counselling, referral, basic training and job preparation programs, which is the third point, will undoubtedly do something to help those on social assistance to move in the right direction, namely, towards self-sufficiency and self-support.

But two things are missing from this, apart from details. First of all, there is no reference to the proposal that the first stage says is necessary in order to complement those two items, namely, with regard to an improvement and expansion of the work incentive program as a first step in developing income supplementation.

In response to a question of mine yesterday, the minister said that he had to wait for federal-provincial negotiations to do anything in the area of income supplementation. I took that to mean that he was not going to do anything by way of any improvement or expansion of the work incentive program, which does provide some income supplementation for those who are now in the category of working poor, having begun to move their way off social assistance.

Nor, of course, is there any reference to the provision of benefits. Even to provide dental benefits would be a substantial assistance, not just for the children involved especially, but for the families involved who perhaps try to skimp on a lot of other things in order to keep their children's teeth in any sort of decent repair.

But the government could also quite clearly move with another recommendation that the Thomson committee report proposed at the level of benefits for the working poor; namely, it could provide access to drug benefit cards. That

certainly would be an awful lot cheaper than having the people who have to meet those drug costs go off their employment and to social assistance in order to get access to a drug benefit card so they can manage to keep body and soul together when confronted with health care costs.

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Yet none of those is mentioned, and they are crucial to the second and third points. If the government is going to remove the disincentives to work for those who are already on social assistance so that they can move into employment, if it is going to provide "employment counselling, referral, basic training and job preparation programs" on an expanded basis—I say in parentheses they have not worked very well for this government in the past—if it is going to do those two things in order to help people get into employment, the government has to recognize that those who are on social assistance are frequently such, in terms of their training, abilities, work experience and so on, that they are going to end up in the low-wage economy. The government has to do something by way of improving their capacity to survive in the low-wage economy.

The government does not have to go to Ottawa to make a major improvement in the minimum wage, for example. This party has proposed for years that there be a major increase in the minimum wage, yet the minimum wage goes on at a level which at this time is less than the real value it held a decade and a half ago.

If the government does not, as well, provide for the additional costs that overwhelm low-income families by way of provision of benefits—of course, few of them are in job situations where the employer provides those benefits—it is again going to have them cycling back on to social assistance and welfare as long as we provide an honest and decent support system in the welfare system. It is a total incongruity that if one is aiming at providing an adequate level of social assistance, one then permits people who are trying to work for a living and be productive in the economy to have to survive on something less than that social assistance system and the supports it provides for individuals and families.

The absence of supports in this first stage, the absence of the supports proposed even on a limited basis by the Thomson committee, let alone the ones the government could put in place if it wanted to, prejudice fundamentally those second two points and will render them, I submit to the members, absolutely inoperative. The moment you move off social assistance into that

low-wage economy, you jeopardize your survival and you are going to find your way back, sooner or later, the moment the first crisis arises, on to the social assistance system.

In those respects, I also find that this document does not tell me the government is moving to implement the first stage of the Thomson report's proposals.

Then there is a final proposal: "Increased children's benefits." It sits there in all its mystery. Nobody can tell from those few words exactly what those words mean. If I were to read between the lines in some of the minister's statements, made in the couple of weeks prior to our reassembly here at about the time the poverty marches were putting a good deal of heat on him and on the Premier and the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon), I would have to conclude that those words are probably an echo of his noting that he would have to do something to provide targeted subsidies for day care for those who are on social assistance; in other words, move the day care system backwards into more of a welfare-oriented system than a social service as the government originally promised in all of its policy documents.

If that is the case, then that is very unfortunate. If it indeed means something more, one wishes the government had said what it was. Those out there, for example, in the Child Poverty Action Group, in the teaching community, in the nursing community, those who have had hands-on experience of the problems of child poverty, the problems that children who are poor have in learning, the problem one is discovering, in this city in particular, of the need to provide breakfast for children who go to school so that they can learn properly—if in fact these three words, "increased children's benefits," mean some major response to the needs of poor kids, then one can only shout and clap one's hands in glee. I will do that indeed if something substantial appears in the budget in about a week and a half's time to flesh out these three words in that direction. But for the moment, all the hints we have tell us that those three words simply mean some targeted welfare form of day care, and that will be the end of the story for the time being.

There is nothing here, I hasten to go on to say, that tells us the government is going to address the question of system simplification. The Thomson report pointed out that the 22 categories of social assistance in Ontario made absolutely no sense whatsoever. They could find no coherent reason for them. In fact, they discovered that a mother with two kids could find

herself in one of 32 places in the system. It is a totally irrational pigeonholing of people on the basis of some supposed position in the hierarchy of whether one was a deserving poor person or not a deserving poor person. There is nothing in this throne speech that promises the government will move in that direction.

There is nothing that tells us there will be elimination of the discretionary powers in the regional offices around this province that make it so difficult for clients of the system to know where they stand at any point in time. The rules can differ from here to there to somewhere else. They are inconsistent and they clog up the whole system of appeals because nobody knows where he stands. Then the appeal board has to go through a rigmarole trying to determine whether he does or does not qualify for this or that and the whole system sort of slowly grinds to a halt. In the meantime, the recipient sits out there. The benefits are not maintained while the appeal process is going on and misery is compounded by misery.

There is nothing in this document, the throne speech, to tell us that the government proposes to respond to the desperate need for an improvement in case load ratios. Anyone who talks to the people in the social work community knows how absolutely desperate their work situation is. Children's aid societies in Hamilton are on strike at the moment, one for one major reason, namely, that the provision of personnel is so short that they are constantly badgered into doing overtime. They spend their evenings and weekends as well as their weekdays working on their cases. It becomes impossible to get any relief from what is a very stressful profession, and of course people burn out, drop out and head elsewhere. There is no response to that in the throne speech either, nothing for the improvement of case loads and workloads.

Finally, there is nothing I see here that tells me the government is moving this year to do what the Thomson committee felt was essential at this stage of the reform process; namely, to move in the direction of consistency and accessibility in all the municipalities across the province as far as the social service system is concerned.

It appears that the delivery of social assistance on an arbitrary, differential, varied basis across the province will continue and nothing in the throne speech tells us it will be otherwise. In other words, as far as one can tell at this point, the government is not in fact moving on the first full stage. It is not sending the signals to the social

assistance recipients, the working poor and those people who work with those individuals.

The member for Renfrew North (Mr Conway) may look very puzzled about all that and he probably knows a great deal more about this than I do. None the less, I hope the semismile on his face tells me that when the Treasurer presents his budget on 17 May, as he told us today he would, these mere four points will find themselves gloriously expanded into the first full stage of the Thomson report's proposals for reform.

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Only in that way will we begin the steady march, step by step, on all the elements of the system in order to reach a final overhaul within three, four or five years' time, when the whole has to be in place for us to have done justly by the poor in our province, to have done justly by the social assistance recipients and to have enabled people to begin to live again with a sense of dignity, independence and self-support. That day will be a day we will all rejoice in.

I must say the throne speech leaves me nervous and apprehensive about the scale of the response this government is anticipating with respect to this magnificent document, the Transitions document, provided by such a capable group of people headed by Judge George Thomson, who have given us, I think, one of the best reports on social assistance reform any administration on this continent has been distinguished to receive.

One can only hope that the government's initiatives will not fail what this document proposes for this province in the end, and that those who exist in dependent poverty and those who exist in working poverty will be relieved of that burden in a very substantial way within a very few years.

Mrs Marland: I am glad to have this opportunity to respond to the Liberal government's throne speech of last week. What I am not glad about, however—in fact, I am very disturbed about it—is the hollowness of this document, being the speech from the throne dated 25 April 1989.

Normally, a throne speech outlines a government's commitment to the future. Important issues facing the public must be addressed and decisions made. This Liberal government has taken upon itself to throw its responsibilities out the window and fill these pages with vague promises, without any realistic forethought or planning as to how programs are to be implemented.

I notice on the bottom of the document a caption that reads, "This paper contains recycled materials." Nothing could be more accurate.

Let me focus for a moment on environmental issues. How seriously does this government take budgeting for our environment? Obviously, the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) would prefer the Ministry of the Environment to be run from the proceeds of a game of chance, namely, his newly announced lottery called Cleantario. Maybe we can fund it, maybe we can't, is the attitude of the Treasurer and the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley).

The Liberal government says: "Let's not take a leadership role and decide to make a commitment to the environment. No, let's see how much we can squeeze out of the pockets of the already overtaxed public to pay for things that the Liberal government should be paying for from its existing surpluses."

I am sure the Treasurer is well aware of the Decima Research poll done a couple of years ago that showed lotteries are most often played by those who can least afford them. Why, then, is he further taxing the poor by playing upon human weakness, when he should be working with the polluters to help make Ontario a cleaner province?

Interjections.

Mrs Marland: Mr Speaker, I notice you have now taken the chair. I would respectfully request that you ask for interjections not to continue during my speech, especially those being made by two members sitting in the front rows, who are not even at this point in their own seats. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I would like to continue to comment on waste management. Will this Liberal government ever put something concrete in motion to deal with what we know is a waste crisis today? We have in Mississauga and Metro dump sites that are filling up and will in fact be complete in one, two and three years. yet this Liberal government has ignored the reality and tried to convince this House that recycling would solve all the landfill problems. Those statements were a joke then and they are now.

Yes, recycling is necessary and important. If the government is sincere and wants to follow through on its promises on recycling, then the government will reconsider my private member's bill that would make recycling mandatory.

It is fair and accurate to point out that during the election campaign in August and the early part of September 1987, the Liberal Minister of the Environment, the member for St Catharines (Mr Bradley), and his parliamentary assistant, the member for Brampton North (Mr McClelland), both completed questionnaires submitted

to them by environmental groups asking their opinion about mandatory recycling, and they both said they were completely in agreement and supported the concept of mandatory recycling. However, when my private member's bill was presented in this Legislature last fall, the government members, led by the parliamentary assistant, the member for Brampton North, all spoke and voted against that bill. There has to be some irony in that event.

However, those of us who understand a little about waste management and a great deal about the fact that there is a crisis today in Ontario know we cannot recycle everything. The reality of the crisis is appearing every day at dump sites throughout southern Ontario. The fact is that the Liberals have failed miserably in dealing with the waste management crisis. Their efforts to solve the disposal crisis facing greater Toronto have resulted in pitting one neighbouring region against another neighbouring region in what I am convinced is an underhanded plan to short-circuit the process for environmental assessment.

It is a pretty scary thought that there might be any consideration, through the greater Toronto authority, for waste management proposals that may eventually result in anything being considered as a shortcut, any proposals that would not be subjected to the full investigation of the Environmental Assessment Act. I emphasize it is the Environmental Assessment Act, not the Environmental Protection Act. The Environmental Protection Act is not sufficient when we are looking at the emplacement of landfill sites in any area of this province.

1610

In Mississauga we have one project that I am very concerned about, and that is the proposed burning of garbage at the St Lawrence Cement plant. The St Lawrence Cement plant is far behind schedule in submitting its draft environmental assessment documents, and I hope the ministry is not now going to decide that the environmental process can be waived to accommodate the burning of garbage at St Lawrence Cement before we have any study as to whether or not it is both safe and practical for the location being proposed.

I certainly hope the Minister of the Environment will be reminded by his staff that St Lawrence Cement has been out of compliance with a control order now for more than two years. I think St Lawrence Cement, as a corporate citizen within my riding, would do well to fulfil its commitments for its existing operation, which is the manufacture of cement. While they are out

of compliance with a control order, how they could even be considered for another operation, that of burning garbage, is beyond me.

However, there is nothing to stop a company filing an application to burn garbage. Fortunately for the people in my riding of Mississauga South and the people in Ontario as a whole, there is the Environmental Assessment Act, through which approvals must be processed in order to protect the environment so that any operation is proven to be safe.

There are other questions that have yet to be addressed about the St Lawrence Cement project or proposal to burn garbage, not the least of which is the trucking through the residential communities to that location. I have not yet received a reply to the questions I have raised by letter to the Minister of the Environment as long as three years ago. I am just referred back to the fact that my questions will be answered at the time of the environmental assessment hearing.

That is why it is particularly important that I emphasize that the environmental assessment hearing take place to its fullest extent, because the questions I have asked regard the location of St Lawrence Cement immediately adjacent to the shores of Lake Ontario, a very large body of water which is presently heavily polluted. Lake Ontario already costs us millions of dollars every year to purify its water through our water treatment plants in order that we can drink it safely. Therefore, to consider incinerating garbage adjacent to that water and adding a greater risk to polluting that water, and therefore a greater cost to cleaning it in order that we may drink it as drinking water coming through our taps, is a question that needs to be answered.

Another question about St Lawrence Cement that has not been answered in terms of its proposal to burn garbage, and one which the Minister of the Environment must address, is that when there is a downturn in the economy, a reduction in construction in this province or across Canada and indeed the sales of its product—namely, cement—are down, if the company is not manufacturing cement in the same volume as in high construction times, what happens when there is downtime at that plant?

What would happen to garbage? Does garbage continue to flow to the doors of the St Lawrence Cement plant, and where is that garbage stored if it is not then being used as energy and fuel in the manufacture of cement? Also, when there is a mechanical downtime at St Lawrence Cement, what happens to the garbage that those trucks are continuing to bring to its door?

I will not take any more time and detail the other questions that I have at this point on St Lawrence Cement as a proposed location for incinerating garbage, but it is a very serious matter because at this point it is ironic that the city of Toronto has put a moratorium on incinerators and we do not have an incinerator burning garbage in Ontario today.

The very same Minister of the Environment who is willing to consider burning garbage at the St Lawrence Cement plant has already registered his concerns about the incinerator at the Detroit plant in the United States. How interesting that we are going to complain about burning garbage in the United States and we are considering burning garbage here in Ontario in the absence of new air emission standards.

The fact is that we do not have air emission standards in Ontario today that pertain to the operation as proposed by St Lawrence Cement; namely, burning garbage as a source of fuel to its operation in the manufacture of cement. So I will look forward to receiving those answers to my questions which the minister, to this date, has refused to give me directly; he has simply referred me to the environmental assessment process.

I will still look forward to receiving those answers so that I can reassure the people whom I represent in Mississauga South, and in fact other people beyond the borders of my riding, because certainly the plume from the St Lawrence Cement plant does not only float over Mississauga South, it floats over the riding of my colleague, who is in the House this afternoon, the member for Oakville South (Mr Carrothers).

I know he has residents who are equally concerned about this operation. Joshuas Creek Ratepayers Inc. in his riding held a very large meeting with over 600 people in attendance. The member for Oakville South and I were both there and shared the concern of those residents at that time.

The throne speech says the Liberals will "continue to demonstrate leadership in environmental protection to ensure the quality of our air, water and food." To date, this leadership has largely been press releases announcing programs.

The Countdown Acid Rain program, the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program and the ban on chlorofluorocarbons will not be effective for several more years, with no guarantee that an alternative to the ozone-destroying compound will be found. It was disappointing that when the minister announced

his ban on CFCs he did not announce any plans for research and development into alternatives for CFCs to be used in products. So without any research and development being planned or suggested, we in fact do not have the solution to the damage that CFCs do to the ozone layer.

The ban that has been placed on CFCs in Ontario today in fact addresses only eight per cent of the problem. Ninety-two per cent of the problem lies with refrigeration and air-conditioning units, and until there is some research and development into an alternative method and material to be used in refrigeration and air-conditioning units, we are still going to be faced with 92 per cent of the problem that CFCs present to the ozone layer today.

1620

The few new initiatives announced in the throne speech will take just as long or longer to implement. They announced they will be imposing strict control standards to cut acid-rain-producing auto emissions by one third. This will not be enforced, however, until the year 2000; that is over 10 years from now. Interestingly enough, of course, it is a much longer period than the federal government has announced. They have already taken that initiative.

Acid rain: Ontario Hydro is by far the biggest producer of acid gas emissions in the province. The recent announcement by Ontario Hydro of its initiatives to reduce acid gas emissions actually fall short of the expectations of an environmentally conscious population, when we have eight coal-fired thermal plants around this province operated by Ontario Hydro. In this announcement by Ontario Hydro about its initiatives to reduce acid gas emission, it talks about installing two scrubbers in the next 11 years. It has to know how concerned we are.

The Lakeview generating plant alone has four stacks. The Lakeview generating station in my riding of Mississauga South was to be phased out of use by the early 1990s, after about 40 years of operation. It now appears that Lakeview will be needed to supply what Hydro has told us is the ever-increasing demand for electricity through the 1990s. So Lakeview will remain in operation, in fact, producing more power and pollution than in recent years, yet without any—and I emphasize this—modern scrubber technology fitted to the facility. We were, in fact, promised by the Minister of the Environment and Ontario Hydro that scrubbers would be fitted to the Lakeview generating plant three years ago, but now there are no plans for scrubbers at Lakeview.

I want now to turn to the subject of health care. The difficulty in talking about health care is the fact that it is not a subject that is close to anybody's heart, and I do not use that as a pun; but it is not a subject that is close to any of us until it hits us, a member of our family or our friends. Fortunately, in Ontario most of the population is healthy. Although it is questionable, I would suggest that most of the people in this Legislature are also healthy.

Health care becomes a very personal issue for those families whose health is diminished for one reason or another, and it is only then that we are aware of what the standard of health care actually is today in Ontario. In a recent survey in my riding of Mississauga South, 67.3 per cent of the more than 2,000 respondents felt that our health care system is worse now than it was five years ago.

The Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) continues to show little compassion as we recite in this House on an almost daily basis the crisis occurring in the health care system across this province. Two days ago, I brought to the attention of this House baby Jessica Godman, who desperately needs heart surgery. The need to operate has been determined by her doctors. The reason that Jessica and many other babies and adults are on waiting lists waiting for heart surgery is because the Health minister refuses to tackle the issues of nursing shortages and hospital bed shortages.

Mr D. R. Cooke: It is because her doctor said she could wait. The doctors decide who gets an operation.

Mrs Marland: I hear the member for Kitchener talking about the fact that it is the doctors who make the decisions. No one in the Progressive Conservative caucus is disputing that. No one disputes the fact that it is doctors who make medical decisions. What I am disputing is the fact that once those doctors make that decision those patients go on a waiting list. My concern is that those waiting lists exist.

Not only that, as I have said in this House, we have different kinds of waiting lists. We have emergency waiting lists, we have urgent waiting lists and we have priority waiting lists. I do not think there should be any Liberal member in the entire House proud of the fact that we have waiting lists for any kind of health-saving remedy in this province today, most of all heart surgery. I would be embarrassed to be sitting in this House saying, "It's the doctors."

Nobody is disputing the fact that it is the doctors who make the medical decisions. How-

ever, it is the Liberal government, and in particular the Liberal cabinet, that makes the funding decisions, which is a political decision. It is a political decision as to where money is spent by this government, and this Liberal government apparently has great difficulty in making those decisions in the best interests of those patients.

There do not seem to be any priorities in terms of human need by this Liberal government. I find it ironic that this Liberal government is talking about making junior kindergarten mandatory when there are small children—in fact, three-month-old infants—on waiting lists for life-saving surgery who may never make it to junior kindergarten if they cannot receive the needed medical attention. I find it ironic that this Liberal government places a priority on funding programs up to \$200 million, the announced figure for mandating junior kindergarten around the province, while there are waiting lists at Sick Children's Hospital or any other hospital for patients any other age in the province.

I have often said that any member of this Legislature could stand on any public platform in Ontario and defend not spending money on anything except health. They could go to any public platform anywhere in the province and say, "I'm sorry. We can't build your road. We can't build your new bridge. We can't give you funding for your community centre," whatever the project is. But not to fund a program that involves health is something that none of the Liberal members will understand until it hits them. I can truly speak from personal experience on this.

The speech from the throne is also silent on a number of the key issues currently dominating the health care policy field, issues such as the nursing shortage, health care costs and waiting lists, as I have already addressed, and capitation. Let's talk about capitation just for a moment.

For people who do not understand what capitation means, they should be aware that when we talk about capitation, we are talking about a proposal—albeit at this point it is only a proposal, but I am giving fair warning to this Liberal government, on behalf of the people of Ontario, that if it puts a cap on doctors' billings through the Ontario health insurance plan, what it is going to say to the people who live in this province is that they had better get sick the first half of this year, because if they are sick in the second half or the second third of the year, or whatever, if their doctor has already worked hard and met his billing quota allowable under the

OHIP billing from the Minister of Health of the Liberal government by a certain month in the year, then there are two things that can happen.

Either that doctor can stop practising for the rest of the year and take a holiday, or whatever, or he can work for nothing. I would ask any member of the Liberal government which one of them is willing to work for nothing. I would ask any member of the Legislature which one of them would work the kind of hours that our health care professionals, namely, the doctors, work and not be paid.

1630

Interjections.

Mrs Marland: It is always significant, when I get on this subject, how much heckling, how many interjections there are, because this government is embarrassed about the fact that it has turned our doctors into civil servants. It is the only profession in Ontario that is now a civil service.

Most of the members of the public in Ontario today still do not understand that doctors can only work if they work for the government. No other profession, no other vocation has that requirement. Nobody else is forced to work for the government except the doctors. If they want to practise medicine, if we want to have doctors in this province today, they have to be civil servants.

I do not happen to believe that this province should have regressed to that kind of requirement for our medical profession. We might as well be in Russia, quite frankly, to have that kind of mandate against our medical profession. Now, the idea of proposing to cap the amount of billings that those doctors do—then all I can say to all members of the government is that they had better not be sick after the doctors have met whatever the allowable cap would be. How much good do members think would be done by that kind of imposition on our doctors?

The truth of the matter is that everybody is a human being, and most of all the doctors in this province. Those doctors are practising medicine today because they chose to practise medicine and help heal people who are ill. They did not choose to be politicians. They did not choose to run for government. They did not choose to be lobbyists. None of those things did the doctors of this province choose to be, and as a result, today they are civil servants.

Mr Faubert: They are civil servants. Well paid, I might add.

Mrs Marland: It is very interesting to hear the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere, Frank Faubert, talk about the doctors being well paid.

The Speaker: Order. I believe that is the fourth time I have heard the member refer to members in this House by their surnames. You commenced correctly by using the riding. If you would just continue using the riding, it would be most appreciated.

Mrs Marland: I will try to restrain myself and just refer to the member by the riding.

The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere is saying that the doctors are well paid. I wonder if that member would ever know what the hourly pay for the physicians of this province is. I would just ask him to try to work that out some time, and then he would know whether in fact the doctors of this province are well paid in comparison to anyone else, especially someone who has invested his own time and money in seven years of qualifications.

The vague commitment to "a number of initiatives" to address certain problems in health care delivery has been assessed in the context of the Liberal government's inability to deliver on last year's commitments to modest improvement in the cardiovascular services.

There is no mention in this throne speech of any specific initiative to improve home care programs or expand the existing system. In fact, underfunding by the Peterson government and bureaucratic delays in developing a realistic funding formula for home care services has placed the Victorian Order of Nurses in crisis.

The Victorian Order of Nurses in Peel is currently running a deficit of \$75,000, while the provincial total is about \$2.1 million. Underfunding the VON services will result in reduced access to home care nursing services, increased cost to taxpayers who will have to fund the higher-cost alternative of sending more patients who could be treated in their home into hospitals and increased pressure on hospitals, which will experience much higher demands for both active treatment and chronic care beds if those VON services are reduced.

The crisis that the Victorian Order of Nurses is faced with now in Ontario is exactly similar to that of the Red Cross homemaker service, which was also pushed to the wall last fall right through to December by this Liberal government. The Canadian Red Cross Society was at the point of being forced to cancel its homemaker service until this government decided to give it a relief grant, but the truth of the matter is that we are looking at a requirement for nursing in the home with the VON instead of nursing in the hospitals.

If we are going to mandate, for example, that hospitals send new mothers and new babies home

within eight hours, which is a program currently being experimented with at the Mississauga Hospital, we are looking at a new mother and a new baby at home eight hours after delivery, having to depend on a Victorian Order nurse or a St Elizabeth Visiting Nurses Association nurse to be able to be in that home and for the nurses to be qualified to look after that mother and that new baby.

However, the government does not see that it is necessary to fund refresher training for those nurses to specialize in the obstetrical and gynaecological requirements in order to render that professional service at home rather than in the security of the setting of a hospital. The government does not think it should pay for that training for those nurses.

The government thinks the Victorian Order and the St Elizabeth nurses organizations should fund it out of some surplus that of course they do not have. Those are nonprofit operations with volunteer boards which work extremely hard to try to plan within their budgets to provide the services the community needs. I commend the VON board in Peel for the work it has done and the St Elizabeth nurses who try to meet the needs of those patients.

Early release from hospital is fine in theory, as long as there is funding to provide the home-based service that is needed for those patients, but we do not have that from this Liberal government. They drive the Canadian Red Cross Society, the VON and other nonprofit organizations right up to the wall in terms of saying, "No, we don't have the money." Yet the alternative is that those patients, the frail, elderly, disabled people in this province in any of those categories, will have to be institutionalized because they do not have the support service in order for them to remain in their homes.

Frankly, the health of those patients, if they can remain in their homes rather than in institutions, is obviously much better because they are in a happier, comfortable environment. But you cannot have one theory without the funding to back up the practice.

In addition to this, we are faced with the fact that seniors are the fastest-growing section of our population. Yet they are not even mentioned in the throne speech. The seniors of Ontario are not even mentioned in this throne speech.

1640

Under education, I would like to talk about the primary focus in the speech being on program development. The program development in this throne speech was in the area of education

referred to as "long-term vision for education in the province."

Part of the long-term vision is to reduce class sizes. The government says it will complete this promise within one year. It is really interesting because the Liberal government has arbitrarily made this decision, although there is no empirical evidence that children learn with a reduction of class size from 30 to 20. There is no question that children learn better in small classes, but a small class is 10 or 12 students, not 20. So the difference between 30 or 20 has no advantage to those children anyway.

Mr Callahan: You tell that to a teacher.

Mrs Marland: It is being suggested that I tell that to a teacher. I have discussed this not only with the teachers but with the school boards.

This promise was originally announced in 1987 as part of an 11-point program which included a commitment of \$297 million in the first year. Two years later, this Liberal government has met only about one half of its original commitment. The fact is that the schools do not have either the teachers or the classrooms to accommodate such ridiculous plans. Who asked for this? Was it some dreamy bureaucrat? It certainly was not the school boards.

Why is this Liberal government refusing to listen to the people in the business of education? Every year the boards list their priorities, and for the past few years, this government has refused to listen. How is it that the government arbitrarily decides what new programs it will introduce? They hold these new programs out like new carrots for the population in Ontario.

They try to please the parents of young children in Ontario. They say: "We'll do this. We'll mandate junior kindergarten. We'll reduce class size. We'll do all of these things." They do not say that they will fund it for ever; oh, no. The operating costs for those programs are on the backs of the property taxpayers in Ontario today. I think it is unfortunate that the Liberal government does not talk to the school boards first.

A school project proposal in Mississauga is just one example. For several years now, the Dufferin-Peel Roman Catholic Separate School Board has studied and recommended the St Edmund school project for budgetary approval by the province. This year, the board ranked it high on its priority list for funding.

Rather than listening to the separate school board, the Minister of Education (Mr Ward) took it upon himself to pass over this priority request and fund lower-priority requests instead. This has left the Dufferin-Peel Roman Catholic

Separate School Board very confused. Why ask for professional input and then ignore it? Why announce programs and then refuse to fund them?

The sad thing I would like to mention about the Dufferin-Peel Roman Catholic Separate School Board is that it is now on second-generation children in portables. I do not know if any other member in this Legislature has that experience, but it is not one to either enjoy or be proud of.

Mr Callahan: It is something that the Conservative government brought in. PCs: portable classrooms.

Mrs Marland: I am now having interjections from the member for Brampton South, whose riding includes the Dufferin-Peel Roman Catholic Separate School Board. He must feel as badly as I do that the Dufferin-Peel Roman Catholic Separate School Board has over 40,000 children in portables.

What standard of education is that for those children and for their parents who see their children having not just one or two grades in portables, but all their education in portables? As I say, we now have children in portables in Peel whose parents were in portables. I think that is pretty disgusting.

One could accept it, however, if there was not any money. But this Liberal government seems to think: "That's okay. Leave those kids in portables, but we'll start mandating some new programs. We'll reduce the class size. We'll mandate compulsory junior kindergarten. We'll keep adding new programs."

They are not being realistic enough to face up to the fact that school boards are in the business of education, that school boards elect trustees who set their own priorities for their own constituents. The Dufferin County Board of Education, the largest public school board in Canada, and the Dufferin-Peel Roman Catholic Separate School Board, for example, have set those priorities, and they are ignored by this Liberal provincial government.

Now the latest Liberal command is that all school boards are going to be required to offer junior kindergarten for four-year-olds and all school boards are going to be given the opportunity to offer full-day senior kindergarten classes if space permits. Full-day senior kindergarten is certainly going to be a very interesting evolution, I must say. Speaking as a mother of three, I wonder how these children who will be in kindergarten all day will even be able to stay awake.

They are making all these promises to improve the size and number of classes, but they are not providing the dollars to increase the number of classrooms. Their back-to-basics promise for kindergarten to grade 8 is old news. The April 1987 throne speech made the same commitment to improve literacy and other basic skills. It is great to make these announcements, as long as the Liberal government will not dig into its pockets to fund them. No, they do not dig into their pockets; they dig into ours.

Following the recommendations of the select committee on education, the Liberal government plans to eliminate streaming in grade 9. Grades 10 to 12 will become the specialization years. Given the current serious shortage of teachers and no means to address the problem, the long-term vision to improving education is blind.

Similar to the health care section of the speech, the education section makes no mention of the difficult decisions which have to be made to build a high-quality and accessible education system in Ontario. There is no reference to the contentious lot levy proposal, the broader question of education funding, nor teacher supply problems.

Only a few days before the speech, the member for Mississauga West (Mr Mahoney) indicated to the local press that the lot levy idea would be the solution to the whole education funding problem. I expected to hear in detail the government's plans, but again, nothing.

Surprisingly, the speech makes no comment about improving our colleges and universities. Without a commitment to colleges and universities, where are all these highly educated high school students going to go for post-secondary education?

I just want to make one comment about the lot levy situation. The crisis, particularly in my own regional school area, namely, the crisis for the Dufferin-Peel separate school board and the Peel Board of Education, which I referred to a few minutes ago as the largest public school board in Canada, is today and for the next three or four years. It is quite possible that when the development and growth of Mississauga is completed by the year 2000, the crisis, obviously leading into that year 2000, will have started to diminish.

The truth of the matter is that lot levies are on land before it is registered, on plans of subdivisions before they are registered. Most of the lots that are to be built on are already contained in registered plans of subdivision in Mississauga and Brampton. So when we talk about lot levies, it is really interesting to hear—the member for Mississauga West is the only member I have

heard talking about lot levies, but he talks about how great they have been in Mississauga for municipal responsibilities.

There is no question. I agree with him. I was a member of the council that supported it. It is true we have lot levies in Mississauga to put in place those costly facilities that new development generates: the recreational centres, the arenas, the libraries, the firehalls, the transit systems and so forth. I could not agree more.

But all those facilities are municipal responsibilities. What is lost in this whole debate of lot levies is that we are now putting the cost of education on the backs of those people who are buying their new homes. In a time when we have a very critical housing shortage, to escalate the price of new homes by adding a lot levy for education, when education is a provincial responsibility, we have a great deal of difficulty—

1650

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs Marland: I want to tell members that I do not support lot levies for provincial responsibilities. It is bad enough that we have the costs of education for operating grants on the back of the municipal property taxpayer, without now the cost of new school construction. The fact that this Liberal government is willing to slough off its responsibility for new school construction in Ontario by saying it will charge lot levies is unfair and wrong in my opinion.

It is also a little unfortunate—I cannot use the other word I wanted to use—that the people of Ontario are going to be thinking that lot levies will solve the capital cost of construction for new schools in this province. In fact, it will not have any impact at all on all those plans of subdivisions that are already registered, so there will not be any money coming from lot levies for new school construction for probably four or five years.

We have provincial income tax that is taken from the people of this province to fund provincial responsibilities and is a system that has been in place in this province for a very long time. If the province is not going to meet its financial obligations by funding education, then it had better stop collecting our personal income tax for those purposes.

While we recognize that we have a teacher shortage, there are no provisions to increase the capacity of our teacher-education programs.

On the subject of social assistance, this throne speech does not specifically refer to Transitions, the Social Assistance Review Committee report,

but does indicate that the government plans to implement a number of SARC recommendations. However, even this limited commitment is hedged and watered down by the provincial government's attempt to lay the blame for any failure to implement SARC at the feet of the federal government of Canada.

The Liberal government takes pains to point out that social reforms are a shared responsibility with the federal government and that federal spending restraints may limit the province's ability to achieve its objectives, in spite of the fact that the 1989 social assistance transfer increase, announced by the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr Sweeney), was less than a third of that recommended by the Social Assistance Review Committee, with no mention in the throne speech of improving the benefits for recipients.

Nor does the throne speech commit the government to the full implementation of stage 1 of the Social Assistance Review Committee report, a measure called for by numerous interest groups and by the Legislature's standing committee on finance and economic affairs in its 1989 prebudget consultation report.

The fact this throne speech does not mention improvements in child care services in the province begs the question of where we will put all the children of single mothers who find a job through the government's improvements to the social assistance system.

Economic development and international trade: once again the Liberals say they will "continue"—it is the word they use—to provide leadership in developing the economy of Ontario, yet they give no indication if this leadership will extend to the management of the province's finances. Nor does the throne speech give any hint whether Liberal economic leadership will mean another \$1-billion tax hike in this year's budget.

Rather than positive programs to help Ontario companies and workers take full advantage of free trade opportunities, the Liberals are offering re-employment assistance after layoffs and plant closures, a negative response.

Some of the programs that have been referred to, both in this throne speech and the previous throne speeches of this Liberal government are all previous programs of the Progressive Conservative government, now with new titles.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs Marland: If members were to review the programs that are in existence today, they would

find that 80 per cent of the programs of the last four years are programs—good programs, mind you—that have been co-opted from the previous Conservative government and given new titles. I just hope that when—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. One member at a time. The member for Mississauga South has the floor.

Mrs Marland: I heard the member for Mississauga West talk about the private sector making it happen. The truth of the matter is that in Ontario, the private sector has made it happen for all the years this province has developed into being the premier province in Canada. The reason it is the premier province in Canada is not because of the government of the past four years because it has not happened just in the last four years; it is the premier province in Canada because of the good government and management it had for 42 years under the Progressive Conservatives.

While the member for Mississauga West talks about the private sector making it happen, I hope that he, as a small business advocate, is able to reach his Liberal cabinet ministers on the aspect of the impact of Bill 208. I heard that member talk about the fact that there is a small business impact statement that goes with all legislation to the cabinet. If there has been a small business impact statement accompanying Bill 208 to the cabinet, I am astounded Bill 208 ever left the cabinet room.

That is a bill this Legislature is going to have to deal with very carefully. The fact that the private sector is the strength, the backbone and the largest employer in this province is the reason we have to make sure that we do not legislate it out of business.

It is very interesting that when we look at the work and the responsibility of this province, we look at the committee work that has been done. The select committee on education did not recommend all-day kindergarten.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Deputy Speaker: I apologize to the member, but pursuant to standing order 30, I have to make this announcement before five o'clock: Pursuant to standing order 30, the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr Kormos) has given notice of his dissatisfaction with an answer to his question, given by the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr Elston), concerning general insurance. This matter will be debated at 6 pm today.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (continued)

Mrs Marland: I will conclude my comments on this throne speech by saying only that those interjections, which I have tried to ignore during the past hour of my presentation—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs Marland: —are made by those members who obviously feel compelled to rebut my statements because they hit home to the truth of the matter. If I am entitled to serve as a representative of those people who elected me, I think I am also entitled to speak in this Legislature without interjections. However, if what I have said has had such an impact on the consciences of those Liberal members who have seen fit to interject my presentation today, then all I can say is, so be it.

1700

Obviously, they will have one opinion, and on many subjects I will have another. The truth of the matter will come home to roost when those members go before the electorate of this province, which will not be blind to what the Liberal government is doing for the future of our province, primarily because of the lack of concern in terms of human need for the people of Ontario.

I thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity to make my comments. I only hope that some of the concerns of the members of the Progressive Conservative caucus will be addressed by the Treasurer when he brings his budget out on 17 May. He will realize that those concerns we have raised need to be addressed and that the priority of Liberal government funding must be realistic.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. Do some members wish to make comments or ask questions?

Mr Sola: That was hard to take sitting down, so I have to make a few comments.

First, regarding the recycled material, I would like to know when the honourable member was serious: for the first year and a half of this government when she said we had no agenda, or today when she says we are recycling our agenda? She has to have an opinion one way or the other; she cannot have it both ways.

Let's look at what the speech from the throne said. It said, "Building on our economic strengths," which means we have economic strengths. What we are recycling is improved or greater economic strengths, if there is any recycling.

The second point, "making our education system...more effective": It means we have an effective system. If we recycle something, we will make it more effective.

Then, social assistance: It says to reform it. We have something that is effective now, but we are going to recycle it in a manner to reform it, to improve upon it, no matter what the member says.

Then, "Keeping our communities...safe and secure" means they are safe; they are secure. We are going to build upon that and make them more so.

"Preserving quality health care": "Preservation" means something has to exist, despite what the honourable member says. We have quality health care. We are going to preserve and improve upon it. We are spending one third of our budget on health.

"Leadership in environmental protection" is synonymous with the name of the Minister of the Environment, the member for St Catharines.

As far as education is concerned, last year we had \$96 million for Peel region; this year we had \$157 million.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Brampton South.

Mr Callahan: Mr Speaker, I am glad you recognized me because in the absence of anybody from the official opposition, and only two members from the third party, I think the round came very quickly.

I do not want to respond to the member for Mississauga South because she is a very nice person, but I would like to comment on the leadoff speeches by the Leader of the Opposition and the interim leader of the third party.

Mr Faubert: No, no, it's out of order.

Mr Callahan: I am sorry; I have to comment on her. Well, to the member for Mississauga South, who will carry these back to those august people, about 15 years ago, the former leader of the third party introduced to Ontario a new process of education. I venture to say that was one of the things that attracted me to provincial politics: We in fact ruined one entire generation of children as a result of that.

If we look at our throne speech, the only objection that can really be made by the third party and the official opposition is that we have not given them total specifics so that they can harangue us a little bit more. I can tell them this much: Since my election here in 1985, I have been very pleased with the fact that our government has brought forward funding for those programs they thought about or their

government thought about. We are putting them into place.

As well, we are improving education. We recognize that the education of our youth is the most important thing we can do. Their government seemed to miss that boat for some reason. I think our government is to be applauded for that.

I find it difficult that they can accuse us of having created the portables. In actual fact, what PC stands for is not portable classrooms; it stands for provincial Conservatives. They brought them into being, they started them and they continued them. We are trying to get rid of them.

Mr J. M. Johnson: I did not intend to participate in the debate at this time, as I intend to speak very shortly, likely Monday, but I would like to just make a few comments in reference to the member who has just spoken. "Promoting healthy lifestyles and preserving quality health care." Then it goes on in the throne speech to say, "Accessibility to quality health care for every Ontarian regardless of ability to pay remains a fundamental value and principle of our society."

That is not true. Member after member has got up and raised the issue, like the member for Mississauga South has in the past, about people who are not being provided with accessible health care service. The government should be ashamed to hide behind the statement. There is a problem in health care delivery. There is a problem in accessibility.

I have a personal reason for saying that, which I intend to pursue at a later date, but I am very concerned with the accessibility of health care. If there is a problem, instead of hiding behind the statement that we have such an illustrious, glorious system, why do we not accept that there is a problem and address it and try to solve it, so that the people who come to us and plead for help are given that help?

Mr Faubert: As I listened to the member for Mississauga South I was emotionally torn, because I was not sure how the member, although she is a very nice individual personally, could somehow enunciate a policy that on the one hand said to spend more and on the other hand said to spend less, because it came through typically in the remarks I heard here.

The other interesting thing I noticed in the remarks of the member for Mississauga South was that there was not a single mention of support for social assistance reform. I am not sure whether that means perhaps she lacked the time to do that, or that perhaps in reality her party has no position on it and is not prepared to put forward that position publicly.

When she mentions that somehow we are deficient in our position on social reform, I would like to point out, and it is right here clearly in the throne speech I have before me—perhaps we are working from a different document—“New reforms will be introduced to help individuals move from a life of dependence to a life of self-sufficiency....” That, as all of us who have read the report know, is the basic tenet of the Thomson report. It is the basic thrust of it.

There were other remarks I was waiting for her to make, but as she put forward sort of a litany of fiscal generalities, I think what she really failed to mention was the fact that we have the best Treasurer this province has ever seen. Not only does he have efforts and objectives for providing the fiscal wherewithal for all the ministries, but he indeed has moved and has taken real steps to reduce the provincial debt. I would just like to hear some comments on that.

Mrs Marland: I guess I should be flattered that I have three rebuttals from the Liberal members, and I am indeed.

The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere says we have the best Treasurer. We will find out how good our Treasurer is on 17 May. It is true that he has deep pockets, but they are not his pockets. They are the pockets of the taxpayers of Ontario. Those are the pockets he picks.

In fact, I would be embarrassed if I were the member for Mississauga East (Mr Sola), who has met with the Victorian Order of Nurses. They have pleaded with him about their lack of funding and he stands up today and says, “There’s no problem with the health care in this province.” I really think that is pretty serious.

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When the member for Mississauga East talks about building on economic strength, I would like him to concentrate a little bit on the fact that this province and this Liberal government inherited their economic strength from the former Conservative provincial government.

When he talks about recycling, I think if he reads Hansard he will understand better than he did the first time I spoke. I am sure the members of the Peel Board of Education and the Dufferin-Peel Roman Catholic Separate School Board will be interested to read the comments of the member for Mississauga East when he quotes the dollar figures for funding for education in Peel, because that member knows as well as I do that both our educational systems and both our school boards in Peel are gravely concerned about the under-funding.

Having met with both those boards, it is very disappointing for the member for Mississauga East to stand up and say, “It’s a wonderful world in Ontario today and everything is perfect in Peel in terms of health care, education,” etc, because in fact there is a great deal of concern in Peel on those matters.

Mr Neumann: It is a pleasure for me to participate in this debate on the speech from the throne and to outline for the House the commitments this government has made to reform in Ontario and the record of results, the record of action which has come from that.

The speech from the throne is an important time in the Legislature. It is a time for the government to lay forth its agenda for the coming session and it is an opportunity for the citizens at large to look at that proposal, to look at the broad direction which the government is enunciating and to come to realize the kind of legislation and the kinds of initiatives to expect over the coming session.

As a newly elected member of this Legislature, this is the second time for me to experience this process, and I am quite pleased that the last speech from the throne provided a guidance for our first session of the 34th Parliament, a session which produced a lot of results.

I would summarize the kind of direction we are heading in with the initials VCR. We put forward our vision, we enunciate the commitment to implement that vision and we produce results: vision, commitment, results, from a government of reform with a record of action, a government which is open and accessible.

I had the opportunity during my first year here at Queen’s Park to work as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr Eakins) and I want to relay to the House that it was a tremendous experience for me. I learned a great deal from the Minister for Municipal Affairs in the way he met with delegations and listened to the municipalities across the province. He consulted on many issues with members in caucus with municipal experience and with municipalities across the province.

It was a kind of example of the open-door policy of this government to accompany that minister to various sessions of municipal representations and conferences and know that the minister’s door was always open to hear from the municipalities of this province and to listen to what they had to say. I learned a great deal through that process and it encourages me that we are continuing to be a government which is open

and accessible to the people of Ontario in many areas.

This speech from the throne outlined six important areas. I intend to comment on each of those areas to talk about what has been achieved provincially, how that has affected in a positive way the community which I represent, the city of Brantford, and what we can look forward to over the coming session. These six areas talk about economic strength, education, social reform, safety and security, quality health care and a clean and safe environment.

First of all, on the whole issue of economic strength, the speech from the throne indicated that the government intends to build upon our economic strength to ensure tomorrow's growth. This will be done through improving education, training and adjustment programs. Look at the record of performance during the past session.

We have implemented the centres of excellence program; committed \$116 million to an industry research program; introduced the research and development superallowance—these are commitments to the future—allocated \$50 million annually to combat illiteracy; and established the Ontario Training Corp.

To provide the overall direction and guidance, there is the Premier's Council on technology, which is looking at what Ontario's strengths for the future should be; what industries should be encouraged to do in terms of adopting new technologies and creating opportunities for entrepreneurs and for our young people.

Locally, our community has faced a difficult time of adjustment with the demise of some major industries. Massey, White and a number of other smaller manufacturing firms have faced an end to their operation in our community, a community which once saw the farm equipment manufacturing sector as its strength and the heart of the economic development at the turn of the century.

This was the leading-edge technology resulting from inventors and entrepreneurs of the 19th century who were on a new wave of technological development, meeting expanding markets with the opening of the west and the mechanization of agriculture. In today's times, in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, these industries, which were the core of our manufacturing sector, met difficult times and met their end.

This meant a time of adjustment for workers and a time of challenge for the community to diversify, to develop new areas of strength and to build on traditions of the past and forge paths for the future. Our community met that challenge.

Families in our community are continuing to suffer and to face the challenge of transition.

It is amazing to me how well the people of our community responded to the challenge of the 1980s. The chamber of commerce, the labour council, the Canada Employment and Immigration centre, Mohawk College and the education officials and community leaders all pitched in and rose to the challenge of encouraging new strengths for the community and new opportunities for people who had to seek out new jobs, and for young people entering the labour force.

The provincial government in Ontario fortunately adopted a pension benefits protection scheme which has come to the rescue in terms of protecting the pensions of the people who faced lost industries. The Transitions program has been taken up by a number of people in our community for the retraining of older workers.

On the forward-looking side of things, we have recently received a \$10-million commitment for the development of a new industrial park in our community, which is taking up the challenge of recycling mined-out aggregate areas into a modern, new industrial park right on Highway 403.

Last September the Premier (Mr Peterson), along with our Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon), announced a \$10-million commitment for this scheme. This was a follow-through on a commitment made by the previous government but not carried through. When that area of the city was annexed to the city in 1980, there was a commitment to the fact that it was a real challenge to develop these gravel pit areas into an industrial park and there would be provincial support to do it.

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The previous government did not follow through and did not come up with it. I placed it as a very high priority when I was elected as member for Brantford, and by last September we had a \$10-million commitment. Because Brantford has done so well at attracting new industries into its existing parks, we have to plan for the future and to have serviced land on which to expand in a modern, new industrial park.

We are pleased that Ontario, in building on economic strengths and looking towards the future, produced results in our community with that \$10-million announcement.

As well, we are working towards the completion of Highway 403 between Brantford and Ancaster. The Minister of Transportation (Mr Fulton)—I am pleased to see he is right here with us—is certainly aware of how important this

project is, not only to the community of Brantford, in forging its economic diversity and strength for the future, but also for the entire southwestern Ontario area.

It connects border crossing points at Detroit, Windsor and Sarnia through southwestern Ontario, the Niagara Peninsula, over to border crossings at Niagara and Buffalo. It is right on the path to major North American markets, and the one missing link in that whole stretch of four-lane highway is a short distance between Brantford and Ancaster. It is not just a road from Brantford to Ancaster; it is part of an Ontario network which needs to be completed. I am pleased that this government has made a commitment to complete that highway by 1997.

Interjection.

Mr Neumann: Was it 1996, minister, I believe? Yes.

Recently, the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mrs McLeod) visited our community and announced a \$6.2-million expansion of Mohawk College. Brantford has been bypassed in the past in terms of post-secondary facilities and programs. Initially the Mohawk College presence in our community offered only adult-interest courses and retraining programs. Gradually, however, full-time programs were introduced, and we have seen expansion of those programs over the years.

The recent announcement by the Minister of Colleges and Universities of a \$6.2-million Mohawk College expansion will mean the addition of important new, full-time programs for students in our area. New programs in packaging technology are one example of how Mohawk College is keeping in tune with the times in offering courses of need to industry. There is a tremendous shortage of packaging technicians across Canada, and Mohawk College will offer a program which will be of interest to students from many areas.

In addition, Ontario has made a commitment, along with the federal government, to a new telecommunications discovery centre. This commitment amounts to \$11 million. Brantford, the birthplace of the telephone, looks forward to being part of the very important telecommunications sector in our community. It is an example of how a community facing the need for dramatic change can look towards the future to an important sector like telecommunications, which is influencing such a great diversity of our lives today. This sector had its beginnings in Brantford with the invention of the telephone in 1874. We

are not rejecting our past. We are building on our strengths.

The International Telecommunications Discovery Centre will have as its main theme a tourism project, a science centre of telecommunications which will attract hundreds of thousands of visitors and certainly will create some jobs in our area; but, more importantly, it will help to change the image of the community and make Brantford a national focal point for telecommunications. This will assist us in attracting industries related to this field and providing opportunities for our young people.

On this first theme, building on economic strengths and transitions to the future, the efforts of the provincial government have not only produced results across the province, but also in our community in Brantford.

The second point that is mentioned in the throne speech is education, a springboard to opportunity. We have committed ourselves here to a purposeful and relevant education system, to meet the economic potential of our province and the individual potential of our people. During the past session, we provided significant new funding to reduce class sizes in grades 1 and 2. We increased funding for additional computer technology, new textbooks and enhanced learning materials. We announced major increases in annual funding for school construction: four times the 1984-85 levels. We established a select committee on education to look towards the future.

In my area there were results there as well. Part of those education grants were allocated to my area, and the very difficult challenge of portables at St John's College is being alleviated with a major capital expansion now under way. With the recent announcement of new capital dollars for a new high school for the separate school system, we can be assured that over the coming years there will not be a need for portables.

I would like to tell the members of the House about an important project which opened in my community last fall. The Branlyn/Notre Dame Centre consists of an elementary public school, an elementary separate school and a recreation centre operated by the city recreation department. Three partners came together and put together a very difficult project. They designed the building together, it was constructed and they have signed a long-term joint-use agreement.

This should be a challenge to other areas. It should be an example to other areas of how public school boards and separate school boards in a new area of a city where all the new growth

has occurred can work together and put schools on the same site, sharing common facilities like gyms and staff rooms. This experiment has worked very well, and we were pleased to have the Premier there to officially open it last September.

In addition, there are efforts under way to encourage further discussion and co-operation between industry and education officials in our community, to make sure the education system that we have will meet the needs of the future. As well, announcements were made for the opening of another new public elementary school in our northeast area of the city.

In the speech from the throne we are looking forward to the future in education, in providing half-day junior kindergarten for four-year-olds, half-day senior kindergarten for five-year-olds and moving towards full-day senior kindergarten where classroom space permits; revitalizing the curriculum from grades 1 to 6 by focusing on literacy, analytical and communication skills; ensuring a core curriculum in grades 7, 8 and 9 that emphasizes development of basic skills and progressive problem-solving; eliminating streaming in grade 9 and ensuring that grades 10 to 12 will be developed as years of specialization. These are important new reforms and they will be done in the context of consultation with education officials and citizens across the province.

The third area on which the speech from the throne touched is the whole area of social assistance, social reform. Once again this emphasizes the sharing and caring society which we in Ontario represent. The speech from the throne said that poverty is the lead domino in a chain of problems that encompasses poor health, shorter life and lower educational achievement. It is important that new reforms move people from a life of dependency to a life of self-sufficiency.

Progress in the last session included substantial increases in benefits for social assistance programs and substantial increases in funding for provincially subsidized child care spaces. In our community we have seen a new day care centre open at Pauline Johnson Collegiate, the West End YMCA day care centre and new day care centres under construction in co-operation with the Boys and Girls Club project in west Brantford. As well, the two new schools announced recently, a new high school and a new elementary school, will both have day care centres in them. We can see that there is an ongoing commitment to day care.

Measures to reduce homelessness were achieved in the last session of the Legislature. In our

community, St Leonard's Society has recently opened a home for resourceless youth, which is in keeping with this theme. We have increased funding for shelter subsidies.

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A number of interesting projects have been put on stream in our community, including a \$500,000 community economic development pilot project, which will attempt to move single parents on social assistance, to reduce their dependency and to encourage them towards self-reliance through self-employment. There are many talents which people who are on social assistance have. Some of these talents can be channelled into new small businesses. This is possible to achieve, and this pilot project will demonstrate that in Brantford.

We recently saw Eastdale, a neighbourhood in our community, which is part of the Ontario housing resources across Ontario, through self-reliance receive support from this government to the tune of \$38,000 to establish an Eastdale Neighbourhood Resource Centre to help the kids in that housing project develop a more equal footing as they enter school. There will be programs for the young kids, programs for the kids in the summer to try to make up for some of the resources they do not have in their community. This is quite an initiative, and the people in that neighbourhood are to be commended for the initiative they have shown.

I was privileged to attend some of the consultation process the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr Sweeney) initiated with interest groups and client groups across Ontario on the recent Thomson report and I was pleased to hear the openness of the minister, to observe that and to hear the input which he received towards this social reform on which we are embarking.

In this session, we plan to initiate areas which will increase payments for shelter support to persons on social assistance, remove barriers which serve as disincentives to work, expand the network of employment counselling, referral, basic training and preparation programs and provide increased children's benefits.

There is a long road ahead here. We must take those first important steps that put us on the path towards a more progressive, more meaningful social services system which moves people from dependence to independence, which ensures that the talents and the abilities of people on social assistance are used not only for their own benefit, but for the benefit of others in society. They have much to contribute to our community.

The fourth topic which our throne speech dealt with was entitled "Safe and Secure Communities," and in this area there is quite a record of achievement at the provincial level. During the last session, a task force on illegal drug use in Ontario was appointed and my colleague the member for Muskoka-Georgian Bay (Mr Black) produced a report for the Premier.

A great deal of it has been implemented already. We have announced mandatory drug education in grades 4 through 10 in Ontario schools, increased funding for community-based drug and alcohol addiction programs, appointed a Race Relations and Policing Task Force, introduced measures to reduce delays in provincial criminal courts and decentralized Ontario's court system to ensure more accessibility.

In our community, \$21,000 was given as a grant to the family counselling centre to expand its Options to Violence program, providing services for family members who are victims of domestic violence. Another grant was given to the Brantford-Brant drinking and driving countermeasures committee to aid in efforts to prevent impaired driving in our community.

These initiatives build on the strengths of the community volunteer spirit which exists in our communities right across Ontario, not only the economic strengths which other speakers have alluded to, but the strength in the volunteer sector in many cases. We should encourage that. Grants to these community boards and volunteers encourage them to make our communities a better place in which to live.

The throne speech outlined a number of initiatives which will be taken, under the heading of "Safe and Secure Communities":

"Education and prevention programs, including antidrug education in primary and secondary schools, and community-based programs in high-risk neighbourhoods.

"A wider range of treatment programs including employee assistance programs.

"Expansion of Ontario's drug enforcement capacity, including a strengthened OPP drug enforcement unit.

"Expand our efforts to prevent violence against women and children.

"Provide enhanced race relations training to better equip police to respond to the diverse needs of the community they serve.

"Work with the OPP and all municipal police forces to promote racial equality in employment.

"Urge the federal government to effect immediate changes to the Young Offenders Act.

"Reform our court system to provide improved access to justice."

This is a very important part of the throne speech, and I am sure we will see results in our communities across Ontario.

The fifth area on which the throne speech touched is headed "Promoting Healthy Lifestyles and Preserving Quality Health Care." This is a very important sector of our budget and our initiatives in this province. Communities across Ontario are concerned about our quality health care system. We want to ensure that quality health care is available regardless of ability to pay and that this remains a fundamental value and principle of our society. We will be focusing on priorities of promoting healthy lifestyles and preserving quality health care.

During the past session, a number of initiatives under health care were taken and a number of results achieved. The Premier's Council on Health Strategy to develop a long-term blueprint for health care was brought into being and is already producing results, bringing together people from a variety of backgrounds to take up the challenge of offering health care in a meaningful way to our community, to find new ways to encourage healthy lifestyles and to find new ways to deliver our health care system in a more equitable and effective manner.

A \$100-million health innovation fund was established to develop innovative and cost-effective health services for the future. A shift towards community-based services was taken through measures such as the Health Facilities Special Orders Act, and special educational programs towards disease prevention and healthier lifestyles were launched.

In our community, we saw significant results from a number of initiatives. Approval for a new computerized axial tomography scanner for the Brantford General Hospital was given. That new facility is being implemented there and will provide service at the local level to the people in Brantford who need it.

The Child and Family Assessment and Treatment Centre of Brant County has been opened, making these services more accessible to people in our community, services to families in need, services to children and to young people who need counselling. In the past, troubled youngsters who were in need of psychological counselling or assessment had to go to London or Hamilton. This is very important, because it was the very families who were in a time of stress who could least afford to have to travel for the counselling or assessment sessions.

With the initiative of people in our community who put together a package to establish a child and family assessment unit in our community, the Minister of Community and Social Services responded in his very sensitive way to the need. This centre recently opened in our community and is providing a service. In addition to that, a number of initiatives were taken to improve health facilities at both Brantford General Hospital and St Joseph's Hospital.

In health care, the throne speech outlines a direction for the future:

"Shift the emphasis from treatment after the fact to health promotion and disease prevention.

"Foster strong and supportive families and communities.

"Ensure a safe and high-quality physical environment.

"Try to increase the number of years of good health for Ontarians by reducing illness, disability and premature death.

"Provide accessible, affordable, appropriate health services for all.

"Address specialty care needs in such areas as emergency services, cancer care, cardiovascular services, dialysis, trauma, AIDS and maternal and infant health."

The direction is clear. Health care is a challenge for us all. By working together, we can meet that challenge and provide important services for the people of Ontario and challenge them to participate along this road towards improved health services.

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A final section which is dealt with in the speech from the throne is on the environment. This is a topic which I am very much interested in. The environment is of concern to everyone, but I hear most from the young people in our communities, who know that their future is at stake with the environmental issues that are before us. How do we ensure that the planet will survive? How do we think globally and act locally to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem?

We are committed to producing a clean and safe environment in Ontario. This is a cornerstone of our efforts to promote better health, and we will continue to demonstrate leadership and environmental protection to ensure the quality of our air, water and food.

During the last session, a number of initiatives were taken and results produced. Reduction of sulphur dioxide emissions through the Countdown Acid Rain program has been very success-

ful. This government moved to ban chlorofluorocarbons to protect the ozone layer.

I am quite pleased with the fact that in our community we have a very progressive industry, S. C. Johnson and Son, which in 1976, well before all the publicity about the threat to the ozone layer, was aware of the threat to the ozone layer and moved to eliminate CFCs from all its aerosol can products. This is quite the leadership that they have shown to the community and to industries throughout North America.

This government in this past session has taken up that challenge and has indicated a target to remove CFCs from production of all products in our community. We have established funding and new targets for province-wide recycling programs. I am pleased that in our community the municipal council has decided to participate and is launching a recycling program in our community.

The municipal-industrial strategy for abatement has been launched. This will ensure that cleaner and safer waterways are there for future generations. Most important, the round table on environment and the economy was established to encourage sustainable development. Sustainable development means that we do not work towards the development of our economy without thinking about the future implications in the area of the environment. Let us not rob the future to benefit ourselves today; let us think about future generations.

I was pleased to participate in the private members' hour this past session and to receive the support of the Legislature for my resolution for sustainable development, encouraging the government to apply these principles of thinking about the future and thinking about what our role should be in acting locally and thinking globally about the future of our planet. How can we apply these principles to each and every ministry and every department?

Recently, that same company I mentioned earlier, S. C. Johnson, along with the city of Brantford, participated in a tree-planting program to try to encourage the community to think about our atmosphere. The trees are the lungs of our planet and every time we plant a tree, we help to preserve our future.

The parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment, the member for Brampton North (Mr McClelland), was in my community recently to participate in the tree-planting ceremony at S. C. Johnson to launch this program. I enjoyed having him in my community, as I have

enjoyed having many of my colleagues visit Brantford.

Young people are very concerned about the environment, and I am pleased we can show that in this throne speech we are continuing that dedication to cleaning up the environment and to providing leadership in this area. We are moving aggressively forward in this field in requiring that vapours produced by automobile fuels, which contribute to air pollution, are reduced; in implementing strict control standards to cut automobile-produced acid rain emissions by one third by the year 2000; to implement a comprehensive Ontario waste reduction strategy designed to meet the target of reducing Ontario's solid waste by 50 per cent by the year 2000—this is an ambitious target and we are determined to meet it; to launch programs to stimulate the development of pollution abatement technologies and to encourage our industries and our thinkers to come up with new solutions here and new ways to raise funds to participate in cleaning up the environment.

The new lottery fund, Cleantario, will help to finance ongoing efforts to protect our environment. The citizens of our communities want to participate directly in cleaning up the environment. They are willing to participate in recycling programs. I am sure they will be willing to buy these lottery tickets and feel that they are making a contribution to cleaning up the environment. Rather than mock such a program, I think think it is one of vision and initiative, which encourages people to feel that they can participate directly.

We are going to introduce programs to encourage more efficient water use and conservation by both industries and individuals, and launch educational programs to help students develop a greater sense of personal responsibility for environmental protection. As I said, the young people are the most concerned. They are the ones we hear from on this issue of the environment. This government has shown leadership and will continue to show the way.

We certainly have not achieved everything we need to achieve. There is a great deal to be done. There is a lot of pessimism out there about the state of our planet and the future of our environment, but there is also a message of hope. That hope is that by acting in each of our communities and by the province of Ontario acting within its areas of jurisdiction, we can be part of the global solution and improve the quality of life in our communities.

Last evening the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr Kerrio) visited my community and

spoke on this very subject to a group of citizens who had paid \$100 each to attend a dinner to raise money for an organization called the Brant Waterways Foundation. This organization, initiated by a group of citizens in our community concerned about the waterways in Brant county, put forward a great deal of effort, formed a board and is raising funds to support projects to clean up the waterways in our area.

When they announced this fund-raising dinner, within a few weeks all the tickets were sold out well ahead of the date. Next year they are planning to hold it in a much bigger setting because people are willing to pay \$100 a plate to raise money for cleaning up the waterways. Government cannot find the solutions totally on its own. The tremendous resources of the volunteer sector must be brought to bear on this problem.

People are willing to participate and to support the cleaning of our environment. I am encouraged by the initiatives of organizations like the Brant Waterways Foundation and other community groups right across Ontario that are willing to participate in recycling programs and make them work because we are all dependent upon success in this area.

I have covered the six areas which the throne speech has highlighted, providing a direction for the future and providing some insight about the kinds of initiatives we can expect to see as the ministers in the government come forward with more detailed announcements, bills are introduced and the program is fleshed out as we look forward to hearing the budget in a couple of weeks.

The throne speech provides an outline for the people of Ontario to let them know that this is a reform-minded government, that this is an open and accessible government, that we have an imaginative and creative program program with vision, that we have the commitment to implement this program and that we produce results—VCR: vision, commitment and results—in the six areas of the economy, education, social reform, keeping our communities and neighbourhoods safe and secure, quality health care and environmental protection.

Certainly we are active in many other areas as a government and will continue to be so. However, in these six areas we have indicated an important focus which this government intends to take during the coming session of the Legislature.

This government is willing to tackle the tough issues of our time with vision, to make the commitments along the way through announcements of legislation, announcements by cabinet ministers, and to put the dollars into these programs to make them work.

The people of Ontario are willing to pay dollars if they understand that we are working towards a better society. And those dollars, the commitments of the volunteer sector, co-operation between government and our entrepreneurs and the volunteer sector and the citizens of Ontario will produce results. Vision, commitment, results, in the context of a very important budgetary policy of the Treasurer.

In conclusion, I am pleased to say that I enjoy serving in this Legislature and receiving the counsel of many of the people who have been here for many more years than I have, including the Treasurer, whose budgetary policy has been sound and has been a vehicle for implementing these policies of reform.

A lot of people in our communities are concerned about budget deficits. It seems to be a topic which many people focus on with the recent federal budget. This Treasurer, in each of the budgets he has presented, has reduced the deficit in Ontario. This Treasurer can assure the people of Ontario that the operating costs of this government in all of its ministries is covered totally by the revenues coming in. There is no deficit. Indeed, there is a surplus, and that surplus is put towards the capital needs of this province: the roads, the schools and the hospitals.

Certainly, we are continuing to borrow for some of those capital needs. That borrowing is necessary because of another deficit, and that is the deficit we inherited from the past, a deficit in facilities which was passed on to us. We are willing to borrow where necessary to add to that surplus we have generated in the operating budget to ensure that the deficit in facilities that our communities have faced is met; that the portable classrooms are eliminated; that the roads are built where they need to be built; that the infrastructure of this province is maintained.

So these six areas of reform, in the context of vision, commitment and results, are an example of a government under strong leadership with vision, with our leader, the Premier, showing us the way. I am proud to be part of this team. I am proud to show that this strategy is producing results in my community and in all of our communities across Ontario. I look forward to this session, to participating in this session and to

continue working with my colleagues to assist them in producing results in their communities as they have helped me to produce results in our community in the city of Brantford.

I have been in this Legislature only a year and a half. I have found it an interesting challenge, and I see this throne speech as a beacon to guide us through the coming session and produce results for the people of Ontario.

Mr Elliot: I would like to compliment my colleague the member for Brantford on a very good speech. I found his comments on the speech from the throne very uplifting, particularly following the two speeches that preceded his. I would like to comment on one aspect of his speech in the two minutes I have; that is, with respect to the funding associated with capital in the educational field.

I was in the teaching field before I was fortunate enough to be elected and come to this great chamber, and on at least two occasions I spent a substantial amount of time teaching in portables. This was back in the 1970s and the early 1980s. Those portables were in position, I believe, not because of the present government but because of the lack of capital funding by the previous government. I really think the kind of positive note with which the member for Brantford finished up his speech is the thing we should be emphasizing for the youth of Ontario.

In actual fact, since about 1983 we have had an excellent, buoyant economy. What we should be doing is telling people consistently, day by day, that we should be putting this to our advantage. In this particular throne speech, what was clearly outlined is that we are going to be continuing to put massive amounts of capital into the educational field, so that our youth can be educated even better than they are now, to the tune of something in the order of \$300 million per year for a period of three years. That levers into an excess of more than \$1 billion in capital requirements. I think these massive problems of accommodation left to us by the previous government will soon be a thing of the past because of this.

The Speaker: Are there any other comments or questions?

Mr Mackenzie: Just a couple of questions. The member talked about complaints that people are raising in his community about cutbacks in the recent budget. I am wondering if the cutback complaints he is getting are just on the federal budget or if there are concerns being expressed about some of the programs and transfer payments provincially as well.

Second, I wonder if he can tell us how long it will take these trees planted in Brantford to make up for the cutting of the mature forests in the Temagami region.

Mr Callahan: I think the people watching this on television should understand that the function of opposition is to oppose, but to oppose responsibly. If anybody has ever attended Westminster in England, he would realize that more often than not the members of the government as well as the members of the opposition present their feelings about what the government is doing right or wrong. What I have heard here during the speeches is total negativism. In fact, it should be called the official negativism, not the official opposition, and the third-party negativism.

I think the people of Ontario will make their own judgement as to what has been done by this government since 1985. Massive amounts of money have been poured into the most significant things, such as education—eight times whatever happened during the former government—and health care. In the past—perhaps the member from Barrie can recognize this—they went up to Barrie and suggested they would have a new hospital up there. It was fine for the minister to say that, but there was no money in place. What this government has been doing is saying: “Put it in place. The money is there before you do it.”

In addition to that, how can the third party criticize us when it allows Mr Wilson in Ottawa to create such a budget that it is going to affect the withdrawal of transfer payments to the people of Ontario? You would almost wonder if the Tory government in Ottawa is trying to get even with Ontario for standing up for the taxpayers of this country in terms of fighting the proposals that we could see coming down the pipe from the present federal government. You begin to wonder whether or not they recognize that they are punishing us. We are being held responsible.

The Speaker: The member's time has now expired.

Mr Callahan: We are providing the funds to look after Ontario, not just for today but for the future.

The Speaker: The member for Brantford may wish to respond for up to two minutes.

Mr Neumann: I kept my speech on a high note because I believe the government is on the high road on these issues, but I would comment on two things. The official opposition, the NDP, tends to pooh-pooh the importance of entrepre-

neurship and initiative in the role that our small business sector plays, experiences and offers in our community. We feel this is very important. I know that in our community a lot of businesses were started by the creativity and initiative of individuals. This was true in the 19th century with the start of what became major industries, and it is true today.

1800

We often hear from the third party about how we should be spending more in this area, that area and another area—areas that were perhaps neglected by the previous government. At the same time, they are yapping away about the deficit, “What are you doing about controlling government spending?” So they seem to be talking out of both sides of their mouths.

It is true that I hear concerns expressed to my constituency office, a very busy constituency office, by citizens in our community. These concerns relate to problems at the municipal level, at the provincial level and at the federal level. However, we at the provincial level are addressing these concerns.

We do not have the answers. There are no easy answers to some of these problems, but we are willing to work in co-operation with people at a community level, the people who are dedicated to serving their fellow citizens as part of a sharing and caring society. I am proud to be part of that kind of team.

On motion by Mr Mackenzie, the debate was adjourned.

The Speaker: Does the government House leader wish to make an announcement at this time?

Hon Mr Conway: Yes, I do; this is such a lively afternoon.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Mr Conway: I do not want to keep people here unnecessarily, but pursuant to standing order 13, I would like to indicate the business of the House for the coming week.

On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of next week, we will continue with the reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor. I expect that the vote on the throne speech will be taken next Wednesday at 5:45 pm.

On Thursday, 11 May, in the morning, we will consider the private members' business, and in the afternoon we will consider legislation, more specifically second reading of Bill 218 and Bill 5.

The Speaker: Earlier today, the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr Kormos) gave notice that

he was dissatisfied by the answer given by the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr Elston). Therefore, pursuant to standing order 30, the motion that this House is now adjourned is deemed to have been made. I will listen to the member debate this matter for up to five minutes and allow the minister to respond for up to five minutes.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Kormos: First, I want to apologize to everyone for keeping people here beyond six o'clock, but it is a matter—

Hon Mr Sorbara: We are looking forward to this, Peter.

Mr Kormos: And I am looking forward to indicating, on behalf of probably thousands of people who have bought Advocate General Insurance Co of Canada policies, their feelings of great concern about the status of their coverage, the status of their claims and indeed where they are to go next.

I do want to indicate that I am sure I left this House with some misimpression as to the actual status. I know the minister would have corrected me at the time, during the course of his response, had he been aware of the actual status. I referred to Advocate General as being subject to a winding-up order, and that is not the case.

More accurately, it would be the case that the federal superintendent of financial institutions basically seized control, as I understand it, pursuant to either section 153 or 154 of the Canadian and British Insurance Companies Act, a federal statute. It is that stage the matters are at now. Advocate General is seeking a court order to relieve itself of that takeover, but the federal government's next move is to seek a winding-up order, similarly upon application to a court.

This House already heard about Emelia Perry and the \$1,800 premium she paid, and the message she now gets from her insurance broker to the effect that she has to buy new insurance. Members have not heard, but they will, about Tom Tsaparis from Welland, who has been insured by Advocate General for two years now.

He was involved in a motor vehicle collision. He has his truck in a body shop in St Catharines, after having \$5,100 worth of repair work done to it, repair work that should be covered under his insurance policy. That body shop will not release the vehicle because, for three months now, it has been waiting for payment on invoices for other repair work it has done for vehicles that were insured by Advocate General.

To get his vehicle out of hock, Mr Tsaparis is going to have to raise the \$5,100—he tells me he is hard-pressed to do it—and look for recourse down the road. He, too, is uncertain of the status of his insurance coverage and is concerned about the prospect of having to get back into the market and shop once again in a market where insurance rates are climbing and where the availability of insurance is very limited.

Mr Tsaparis, like Ms Perry, like all of us, has probably read the statements, if not the ones actually in the annual reports of the Ministry of Financial Institutions statements akin to them; that is to say, that one of the jobs of the ministry, the superintendent of insurance, is to ensure that insurance is available to consumers who contract for it and that insurers are financially capable of paying claims of policyholders and others. On a daily basis, this is achieved through monitoring the operations of insurers.

The minister seems to suggest that the remedies available to the superintendent under the provincial Insurance Act are not there in the case of a federally regulated or a federally licensed company. I am speaking of section 15 of the Insurance Act, which requires annual inspections of the books of an insurance company so that a determination can be made, hopefully in advance, as to whether that insurance company is going to suffer the prospect of insolvency and put policyholders at risk.

What is even more interesting, and what I have here, is the 30 July 1988 Gazette, which lists all of the insurance companies that are licensed to sell insurance here in the province. Advocate General is one of them. What is remarkable, though, is that if the minister is indeed correct about the limited ability of the province to supervise those insurance companies, we really cannot put much stock in the superintendent of insurance protecting us, because 407 of those 554, give or take, insurance companies are licensed under the federal statute. Presumably, then, they are not subject to the supervision of the provincial superintendent of insurance.

We have 11 others that are licensed in other provinces, and I am told by the superintendent of insurance that they are not covered. We are left with about 136, 40 of those mutual benefits; and that is not just auto insurance, it is all types of insurance. Really, that is the extent and the scope and the limit of the supervision of the superintendent of insurance.

The Speaker: The member's time has now expired. The minister for up to five minutes.

Hon Mr Elston: The honourable gentleman is making light of the fact that he is dealing with this issue in the Legislative Assembly. He said that if I had known I would have corrected him. I thought it was not worth my time trying to correct him on his language, as he does not seem to learn much about the business in this forum.

He knows full well—and his leader who asked a final supplementary question in leadoff today ended up suggesting that the person whose name was used in the question did not have coverage for insurance. Of course, the situation is such that the insurance coverage is in effect now. In fact, there is no windup. There is, as I had indicated, a court dispute now between Advocate General and the federal authorities to determine whether there should be further proceedings.

That being the case, I think the people of Ontario should know that when they have policies with Advocate General, having paid premiums, those premium-paid policies are in effect. In fact, the federal authorities have put in place an agent who is currently dealing with claims as they come in. Now, it may not be dealing with claims as quickly as the company might have dealt with them, I am told, but it is required to deal with those claims, because the business is in fact in an ongoing status.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that if he is concerned about his example which he used today—the name I am not familiar with, because the honourable gentleman, rather than trying to help his constituent by referring the item to me so I could look into it and help expedite some relief for this person, had desired to make a question in the Legislative Assembly so that he could use it for some other benefit—if I had the material, I could have looked into it.

If, as the member suggested to me, somebody is holding that man's vehicle for a series of other contracts, I do not understand why the member did not come to me very quickly with that item so we could look into it. I am serious about it. When there are difficulties, let me know, so we can work on them to help ease the problem with consumers.

It is not unlike some of the games that were played when I was in the Ministry of Health and there was another full discussion under way that people wanted to use particular incidents and try to surprise people so that they could end up having some kind of an advantage. There is no advantage to surprising the Minister of Financial Institutions. What there is is a disadvantage to the person who has contacted the member because

we cannot move quickly enough to help alleviate the situation.

That is what I have pledged to do and I will continue to pledge to do that. In fact, had I known there was a person who was concerned about his coverage before today's question period, we probably could have had a call out to that individual so that we could have assured him there was coverage in place.

That is not to say that if there is a dispute ending in the courts in Manitoba with an order to wind up, there are not further problems for the people down the road, but we want to be able to assure people who now hold Advocate General policies that in fact they are covered.

There is in addition, if there is a determination of difficulty for the company, a property and casualty compensation plan which will cover claims up to \$200,000 in the event that there is not enough money available to cover claims.

I think what this amounts to is that I should have the ability to say, "I am dissatisfied with the nature of the question of the honourable member and he should have to explain himself to the public." It seems to me this sort of activity requires him to explain why he would not bring this up front to me and my officials so that we could assist both the constituent of the member for York South (Mr B. Rae) and the new person who is named here today in this little five-minute set of remarks that he has delivered.

I really have to say that we can assist people if we know the details, so that we can understand the nature of the difficulties, and all members can bring them to us. We can only do the best we can with the information we have available. Let us know and we will help out.

I pledge myself to help the member for Welland-Thorold understand the business and to help him understand how he can help his constituents and others who come to him with problems. That is what we are here to do. All of us, without regard to partisanship, are here to help people in the province with their difficulties.

I will continue to do that and I invite my colleague the member for Welland-Thorold, without the need for a five-minute debate on his part and five minutes on my part, to assist in his problem areas as well.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Kormos: On a point of privilege?

The Speaker: No. Order. The standing orders allow only two five-minute debates.

Mr Kormos: My apologies, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Since there is no further matter to debate, under standing order 30 I deem the motion to adjourn to have been carried.

The House adjourned at 1814.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

- Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)
 Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)
 Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)
 Beer, Charles (York North L)
 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)
 Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)
Bradley, Hon James J., Minister of the Environment (St Catharines L)
 Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breau, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)
 Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)
 Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)
Caplan, Hon Elinor, Minister of Health (Orillia L)
 Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)
 Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
 Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)
 Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)
 Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)
Conway, Hon Sean G., Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)
 Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)
 Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)
 Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)
Curling, Hon Alvin, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)
 Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)
 Dietsch, Michael M. (St Catharines-Brock L)
Eakins, Hon John F., Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)
Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A., Speaker (Perth L)
 Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)
Elston, Hon Murray J., Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L)
 Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)
 Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)
 Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)
 Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)
 Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)
 Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)
 Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)
Fontaine, Hon René, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)
Fulton, Hon Ed, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)
Grandmaitre, Hon Bernard C., Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)
 Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)
 Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)
 Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)
 Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)
 Hart, Christine E. (York East L)
 Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)
Hošek, Hon Chaviva, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)
 Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Kanter, Ron (St Andrew-St Patrick L)
Kerrio, Hon Vincent G., Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)
 Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)
 Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)
Kwinter, Hon Monte, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L)
 Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)
 LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)
 Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)
 Lipsett, Ron (Grey L)
 Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L)
 MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L)
 Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)
 Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)
Mancini, Hon Remo, Minister without Portfolio (Essex South L)
 Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)
 Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)
 Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L)
 McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)
 McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)
 McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)
 McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)
 McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)
McLeod, Hon Lyn, Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)
 Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

- Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste Marie NDP)
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)
Nixon, Hon Robert F., Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics (Brant-Haldimand L)
Oddie Munro, Hon Lily, Minister of Culture and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)
O'Neil, Hon Hugh P., Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Quinte L)
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)
Patten, Hon Richard, Minister of Government Services (Ottawa Centre L)
 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)
Peterson, Hon David R., Premier and President of the Council and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (London Centre L)
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)
Phillips, Hon Gerry, Minister of Citizenship (Scarborough-Agincourt L)
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott and Russell L)
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)
Ramsay, Hon David, Minister of Correctional Services (Timiskaming L)
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-Walkerville L)
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)
 Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)
Riddell, Hon Jack, Minister of Agriculture and Food (Huron L)
 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)
Scott, Hon Ian G., Attorney General (St George-St David L)
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)
Smith, Hon E. Joan, Solicitor General (London South L)
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)
Sorbara, Hon Gregory S., Minister of Labour (York Centre L)
 South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)
 Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)
 Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)
Sweeney, Hon John, Minister of Community and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)
 Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)
 Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)
 Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)
Ward, Hon Christopher C., Minister of Education (Wentworth North L)
 Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)
Wilson, Hon Mavis, Minister without Portfolio (Dufferin-Peel L)
 Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)
Wong, Hon Robert C., Minister of Energy (Fort York L)
Wrye, Hon William, Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

*The alphabetical list of members appears in each issue. Lists of the members of the executive council, parliamentary assistants and members of committees, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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No. 8

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Second Session, 34th Parliament

Monday, 8 May 1989

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday, 8 May 1989

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr Allen: The vigil for the full implementation of the first-stage reforms of the Transitions report on social assistance continues today at Queen's Park. Members of the Interfaith Social Assistance Review Committee, representing 14 different faith groups, do not believe that the measures contained in the speech from the throne are sufficient to begin to break the cycle of poverty which traps people on social assistance.

The benefits proposed do not assure recipients of 100 per cent of shelter costs. The employability proposals will be ineffective without measures to improve the lot of the working poor, such as a large improvement in the minimum wage and/or medical-dental benefits. The child benefit reference is too vague even to be commented upon.

Missing are such first-stage Transitions proposals as lifting the assets ceilings, standardizing the delivery of social services in all municipalities so that there is equal and accessible service for all, reducing social work case loads and eliminating much of the discretion allowed workers, which creates both discrimination and confusion in service delivery.

The vigil is looking to the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) to make good these failures of the throne speech and to announce the full package of the key reforms proposed in the Transitions report. I join them in their urgent prayers and requests to that gentleman.

NURSES WEEK

Mr Eves: It gives me pleasure to rise in the House and comment on Nurses Week, which started yesterday and runs through 13 May. I think all of us in society have come to appreciate more and more, especially in recent years, the great contribution that these health care professionals make to our health care system, not only here in Ontario but indeed throughout the country and worldwide.

I think it is very appropriate that in the last few years nurses are finally starting to get some respect in the health care field. Unfortunately,

part of this has come because of increased stresses on them in their day-to-day workplace and the shortage of nurses, especially the shortage of specialized nurses, staff nurses, that we see throughout our health care system in Ontario and elsewhere today.

I am pleased to see that the minister has addressed some of the problems with respect to the nursing shortage in Ontario, most particularly those of ensuring that staff nurses have appropriate representation on hospital committees, especially with respect to matters such as finance and the like.

However, those of us on this side of the Legislature are still awaiting some more positive steps from the Ministry of Health with respect to the 13 or 14 other recommendations that have been in four separate nursing shortage reports—I should put it that way, I suppose—that the minister has in her possession. We look forward to her taking the appropriate measures with respect to them as well.

ROYAL CANADIAN SEA CADET CORPS

Mr Tatham: This is the stuff that builds a community. It is hard work and discipline. I was impressed: awards for the most improved cadet, the best guardsman, the best marksman, most tidily. What does "most tidily" mean? That means the most immaculate uniform and appearance on a year-round basis. These were some of the awards presented at the 49th annual inspection of the Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps, Woodstock.

It was an excellent presentation, a show involving teenagers who work hard to learn their drills and share the camaraderie of a ship's company. The band was superb. The drill team presentation represented many weeks of practice. The shear-legs demonstration with ropes and pulleys was completed in just over five minutes, a record for sea cadets.

I congratulate the families, I congratulate the staff and I say to the young sailors that they are contributing to their own development and the future of our country. Well done.

PUBLIC SECTOR PENSION PLANS

Mr Hampton: For some months now both the government's own employees who are represent-

ed by the Ontario Public Service Employees Union and the teachers of the province have been asking the provincial government to bargain seriously on the issue of their pension plans. The main issue for both the teachers of the province and provincial employees is to have an equal voice in the investment and other decisions affecting their pension plans.

This is not a radical or revolutionary idea in a democratic jurisdiction. If anything, the position of the province's public employees and teachers is most democratic, and one would think that the government, a government that portrays itself as being open and consultative, would look favourably upon this position. But for some reason, the government has not. One would also hope that the government would want to be a leading and progressive force in the pension debates in our society, but again, it is not.

One would also expect that the government would take heed of the recent Ontario Hydro decision and realize that time is moving forward in our society, that even the courts now recognize that the employees ought to have an equal say in their pension plan. But alas, the government is not even listening to the courts. The government seems to have its mind stuck in the past on this issue.

NATIONAL FOREST WEEK

Mr Pollock: This week has been declared National Forest Week. It gives us an opportunity to consider the vital importance of our forests to life on earth. Our forests are being destroyed around the world. The rain forests of South America and Indonesia are being destroyed at an alarming rate. In Africa, for every tree that is planted, 29 are cut down. It is clear that every time a tree is cut down and not replaced, the world moves closer to an environmental disaster.

To prevent this greenhouse effect from advancing, we must protect our forests. In our province, we should consider the importance of the forest industry to the economy of Ontario. Over 75 per cent of Ontario is covered with trees. More than 250,000 people depend on the forest industry for their livelihoods. Exports of forest products from Ontario were valued at \$3.5 billion last year. If we want to continue to reap the benefits, we must replant.

I am sad to say that in David Peterson's Ontario, reforestation is not a priority. There has been no leadership in this area of forest management, and a weak commitment to protect the future and health of our forest industry. If the Liberals are sincere about reforestation, they

should spend the \$35 million raised under the softwood lumber tax on reforestation and on forest-related research. This would show Ontario can be proven to be a leader to the world in protecting our forests.

1340

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr Faubert: I rise today to inform the members of this House and consumers across this province of a sequence of events which illustrates the limitations of putting a stop on a cheque as well as apparent inequities in the federal Bills of Exchange Act.

Mr and Mrs Mojsovski, former residents of my riding, wrote a post-dated cheque for \$45,000 to be invested in First Grelor Financial Ltd, owned by one Gregory Kostoff. When documentation was not forthcoming, they demanded their cheque back, put a stop on the cheque at their bank four full days prior to its due date and advised Mr Kostoff. Mr Kostoff then proceeded to deposit the stopped cheque into his account at the National Bank. He returned later and was able to obtain a \$30,000 certified cheque from the National Bank. It was apparent that the National Bank had neglected to clear the Mojsovkis' cheque prior to crediting the funds to Kostoff's account.

When the National Bank discovered that the cheque had been stopped, it was able to recover all but \$16,000 from Mr Kostoff, who subsequently left the country. The Mojsovkis were contacted by the National Bank two years later and informed they were liable for the \$16,000 and the bank was taking action to secure that amount. This was later upheld in a district court ruling under the provisions of the federal Bills of Exchange Act and a judgement secured against their house.

Clearly this was and is inequitable, and I call on all members of this House to make consumers in their ridings aware of the limitations of a stopped cheque. I call on the federal government to review and amend the Bills of Exchange Act to provide better protection for all consumers in Ontario.

PENETANGUISHENE MENTAL HEALTH CENTRE

Mr Reville: Back in 1986 when the standing committee on social development took the opportunity to review the estimates for the Ministry of Health, the then Minister of Health acknowledged that the facility for the criminally insane called Oak Ridge in Penetanguishene

should be replaced. It is 1989 now and this is what the administrator of the hospital is saying: "Some time in the next decade, we would hope some sort of decision would be made. We are keeping our fingers crossed." Thousands of people in Ontario are keeping their fingers crossed waiting for this government to get on with the things it has promised to do.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

CANCER TREATMENT

Hon Mrs Caplan: Beginning today and over the coming weeks and months, I will be making a series of announcements on a number of specific issues related to the provision of health services in our province.

In the recent throne speech, our government reaffirmed its belief that everyone in Ontario is entitled to access to quality health care regardless of ability to pay. As a government, we are prepared to protect that principle and take every step possible to maintain and strengthen it.

Furthermore, we understand that the health of our society rests on more than an effective health care system. We know that the health of individuals is tied to a number of factors, including education, literacy, employment, housing, our physical and work environments, as well as a host of other key influences that fundamentally affect the health and wellbeing of people.

To begin responding to this new understanding of health, my ministry recently identified six areas for promoting change and renewal within our health care system: We want to see better-informed consumers of health care; we want to see a true network of community-based health care in the province; we want to see our hospitals properly funded and well managed; we want to build beneficial relationships with the private sector; we want to see a new emphasis on quality assurance in patient care and treatment, and we want to clarify and promote effective working relationships among health care professionals.

As we move to achieve these goals, we recognize that short-term pressures must also be addressed. I have therefore asked my ministry staff to identify and bring forward an action plan for specialty care, an action plan that will respond to the needs in several key areas: cancer care, cardiovascular services, emergency and trauma care, maternal and newborn health, AIDS, kidney dialysis and lithotripsy.

This morning at the Toronto Bayview Regional Cancer Centre, I was pleased to announce the start of a new province-wide screening program

for breast cancer. As members are aware, breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer-related deaths among women between the ages of 50 and 64 in our province. This screening program will encourage women in this age group to attend cancer screening clinics every two years for a physical examination, mammogram and instruction in breast self-examination.

By 1995, we want to have at least 36 centres established across the province. The cost of the program, while significant, is not our principal concern. The organizational structure, the mix of health professionals, the necessary data and information systems and women educated and knowledgeable about the service are the factors that will make the breast screening program a success.

When the screening program is fully implemented, we expect more than 300,000 women to use it. Experts tell us that with good screening, breast cancer deaths for women in the 50 to 64 age group can be reduced by up to 40 per cent.

The screening program will be administered by the Ontario Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation. Representatives from its eight regional treatment centres will work with members of district health councils, health care professionals and consumers to ensure that the program is implemented in the most effective manner. To support the work of the centres, the OCTRF will develop an education program aimed at women and health professionals which emphasizes early detection and the benefits of breast screening.

I am also announcing today the appointment of Dr Aileen Clarke as the Ministry of Health's new cancer program co-ordinator. Dr Clarke is currently chief of epidemiology and statistics for the Ontario Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation.

In addition to these province-wide initiatives, I am pleased to announce that my ministry has increased its funding commitment to the north-eastern Ontario regional cancer treatment centre to \$16.8 million. This money will be used for the final phase of construction of the new centre at Sudbury's Laurentian Hospital. It includes additional new funding of \$3.3 million for up-to-date, state-of-the-art radiation therapy equipment. Later today, I will be in Sudbury and I look forward to visiting the centre and touring the new site.

When completed, the northeastern Ontario regional cancer treatment centre will provide a comprehensive range of care and treatment, including chemotherapy and radiation therapy, to residents living in northeastern Ontario. The

new cancer centre reflects the growing capability of northern Ontario health services, a capability reflected in the appointment of Vickie Kaminski, assistant executive director of nursing at Sudbury Memorial Hospital, to head the investigative team at Toronto's St Michael's Hospital earlier this year.

While on this point, I wish to remind members that this is Nurses Week throughout Canada. I want to pay tribute to Ontario nurses for the tremendous job they do. Without question, nurses are one of our most important partners in health care. Their dedication, professionalism and concern for their patients' wellbeing permeate every aspect of health care in this province.

The new breast screening program and expansion of services in Sudbury, as well as the other announcements which will follow shortly, are all in keeping with the health goals recommended by the Premier's Council on Health Strategy and adopted by the government, including shifting the emphasis from treatment after the fact to health promotion and disease prevention, increasing the number of years of good health for Ontarians by reducing illness, disability and premature death and providing accessible, appropriate health services for all.

What we have built and achieved in health care in Ontario is extremely good; we are proud of it and, by working together with all our partners in health, will make it even better. We will rely not only on new technology, but also on health promotion and disease prevention, to progressively improve our health status. Our overriding goal is to achieve a healthier future for all Ontarians.

In the weeks ahead, I will be announcing further details of my ministry's specialty care plan, a plan that will reflect the health goals of this government, a plan that, I am confident, will ensure that Ontarians have effective, quality health care as close to home as possible.

1350

Hon Mr Fontaine: I am pleased to announce today a \$1-million grant to the northeastern Ontario oncology program to establish a cancer research centre in Sudbury. This centre, the first of its kind in northeastern Ontario, will have laboratory facilities at Laurentian University and at the northeastern Ontario regional cancer centre at Laurentian Hospital, which is scheduled to open next summer, as referred to by my colleague the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan).

The northeastern Ontario oncology program is affiliated with the faculty of medicine at the University of Ottawa and is collaborating with

the Ontario Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation, Laurentian University and the research division of Inco Ltd.

The new research facility would enable Sudbury, now designated as a health referral centre for residents of northern Ontario, to attract greater expertise and provide a wider range of health and health-related services.

The funding of the research centre will be provided in instalments over a five-year period, with an initial capital grant of \$250,000 for startup equipment. The Sudbury centre will complement the network of other such centres located throughout the province, bringing the total number to eight.

My ministry welcomes the opportunity to support Dr Robert Corringham, the director of the northeastern Ontario oncology program, in his efforts to initiate collaborative research focusing on cancer prevention and on the environmental factors which may be related to cancer and which are unique to the north.

I am confident the research centre will aid Dr Corringham's efforts to recruit specialized staff and ultimately enhance the quality of health care to northern Ontario residents.

Funding for the northeastern Ontario regional cancer centre and the cancer research centre reflects our commitment to provide effective health care programs and services for northerners as close to their homes as possible.

RECREATION FACILITIES

Hon Mr O'Neil: I rise to inform honourable members of the second round of grants my ministry is providing to municipalities and community groups under the new recreation facilities and capital conservation programs for the 1989-90 fiscal year.

Members will recall that I announced phase 1 of this year's series in January. I am happy to announce today that a further \$7 million of lottery funding is being made available for a further 152 projects. This will bring the total number of projects assisted this year to 424, at a total cost of almost \$28 million.

In keeping with the long-term health care directions this government articulated in the recent throne speech, I wish to note that these projects will greatly enhance the health and lifestyle choices of all Ontarians.

Recreation is a key to wellness and an essential part of a healthy, fulfilling lifestyle. One quarter of Ontario's health care budget is spent treating preventable, lifestyle-related diseases; high qual-

ity recreation programs have been shown to reduce these costs by half.

These projects are helping our communities to build and maintain the recreational infrastructure that the people of Ontario depend upon.

These are the places where Ontario's future Olympians will begin their development. Above all, these recreation centres, swimming pools and hockey rinks are at the heart of any community. It is here young Ontarians build sportsmanship, character and the future of Ontario.

I am honoured that the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation is able to play a role in shaping that future.

As we become an increasingly active society, these facilities are becoming ever more important to the lives and health of the people of the towns and cities across the province.

RESPONSES

CANCER TREATMENT

Mr Laughren: I am pleased to respond to the minister's announcement about the \$1 million for the cancer research centre in Sudbury.

The job of heading up that research centre was advertised all across Canada and there were no applications in this country. At the same time, recruiting was being done at the University of Heidelberg in West Germany. A very qualified person, Dr Ho, was found, who indicated an interest in coming to Sudbury and has been stymied by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. The Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan), despite the fact that existing legislation would allow her to intervene and accredit Dr Ho from the University of Heidelberg, has refused to do so.

While we appreciate the \$1 million for the cancer research centre, it is terribly important that a research director be found who wants to come to Sudbury, has the credentials to do the job and whom the people in Sudbury want to have in place at that research centre. It is time the minister got into the game and approved Dr Ho's credentials to practise and direct the research centre in Sudbury.

Miss Martel: I want to follow up on what my colleague the member for Nickel Belt has said concerning the situation in Sudbury. Both my colleague and I have met with Dr Corringham. I know the minister herself has as well. He is greatly concerned that the program of oncology and the program of research in Sudbury will be for naught if they cannot have Dr Ho come to Sudbury to set up that system there.

They have repeatedly approached her ministry and asked for aid with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario to use her power under the act to allow him entrance here. It is ridiculous that we have had no applications across Canada and that we have a highly qualified applicant who wants to come and cannot because of the restrictions placed by the college. It is imperative her ministry do something about that in the very near future.

Just following up on the second announcement that was made concerning the \$3.3 million for up-to-date, state-of-the-art equipment, I want to thank the minister for her generosity in that regard. I am surprised there has been no announcement regarding the 60 chronic care beds that were announced for the same hospital over three years ago. She will know well that the hospital is concerned that without those beds, there will not be any efficient expansion of the oncology program that is required.

Mr Reville: I am responding to the Minister of Health's statement today. I am prepared to predict that we will see the Minister of Health frequently in ministerial statements as she attempts to convince the people of Ontario that she is indeed in command of the health care system.

In terms of the new breast screening program, I think it is important for people to realize what the program is and what it is not. What it clearly is not is health promotion and disease prevention; it is an early detection system. The minister will know, I am sure, that breast cancer is associated with high fat diets and the consumption of alcohol. Unless those dietary and lifestyle problems are addressed, we will continue to detect high levels of breast cancer in women.

The other thing that should be noted is that the mortality rates in terms of breast cancer have not changed in the last 35 years. Another point that has to be looked at with great concern is whether we are going to be sentencing a lot of women aged 50 to 64 to radical mastectomies, because we know that the practice patterns of our surgeons are to rely far too heavily on radical surgery instead of the more, in quotes, conservative kind of surgery.

I think we need to look carefully at these announcements. The minister is trying to suggest she is moving to illness prevention and health promotion. She is not doing it with this announcement and I think it is wrong for her to be trying to trick us into believing that she is.

RECREATION FACILITIES

Mr Farnan: In response to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr O'Neil), there was

some embarrassment on the minister's part in his announcement today, and little wonder. While he announced some projects, we all know there are many worthwhile projects not funded by his ministry. I would like to know when he is going to recognize this in the House.

It is embarrassing for the minister that he leads a ministry lacking in courage to make tough decisions. He has done nothing on rails-to-trails. He is talking about preventive health care, but on the big issues that demand tough decisions, an area where he can go in and say to the municipalities, "We need co-operation and therefore we are going to give provincial leadership to have continuous trails," we are not getting that kind of leadership from this ministry. This odd announcement, worthwhile as it is, is really a recognition that there are some projects, but many more are not being funded.

1400

CANCER TREATMENT

Mr Eves: I rise to comment on both the statement by the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) and the statement by the Minister of Northern Development (Mr Fontaine) this afternoon.

First, on the statement by the Minister of Health, although it is a welcome initiative, I believe the focus she is placing on mammography in Ontario may be somewhat misguided. I would like to quote a few facts, first of all from the Canadian Cancer Foundation. The Canadian Cancer Foundation states: "Breast cancer kills 3,500 Canadians a year and is the major cause of cancer deaths among women. It is the leading cause of death in women from all causes between the ages of 35 and 54 years of age."

I also want to quote from the Canadian Women's Breast Cancer Foundation, which states that nowadays mammography uses very small amounts of radiation, making testing very safe, as opposed to what perhaps was the case in the past. It is recommending base line testing for all women between the ages of 35 and 40 years of age so that they can have later comparison tests, and that women between 40 and 49 should have a test every one to three years, depending on their relative risk of developing the disease.

I would also like to refer the minister to a recent publication, the *New England Journal of Medicine*, dated 30 March 1989. They too come to the same conclusions as these two other bodies, that testing in younger women certainly should take place and should not be restricted to women in the 50-year-old to 64-year-old age group.

If the minister will look at the chart, with which I am sure she is very familiar this being a national cancer survey, in the United States per 100,000 population the graph rises very dramatically for women between the ages of 35 and 50. In fact, that is perhaps the most dramatic rise on the graph, as opposed to women over 50 years of age. That is not saying they do not have a serious problem. They certainly do and I will come to that in a minute, but I do not think the minister should be excluding younger women from this program.

Nor should she be excluding older women from the program. Statistics provided by the Ontario Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation show that in the minister's target group that she has announced today for testing, 50-year-old to 64-year-old women, the mortality rate for breast cancer in this sample year, which was 1986, represented 34.2 per cent of the deaths. However, women 65 years of age and over represented 49.49 per cent mortality with respect to breast cancer being the cause of death.

I ask the minister to rethink her program a bit. I appreciate the work she is doing, but I hope I am not correct in assuming she is doing this particular group because of financial considerations as opposed to health considerations. I think it is very important that younger women be provided this base line testing as well, and I think it is just as important, as she will see from the mortality rate, that older women have this opportunity also.

If I may now address the statement made by the Minister of Northern Development this afternoon, this indeed is a welcome announcement, but it is an announcement that has already been made. The people in northeastern Ontario and the Sudbury area have known about this \$1-million funding from the Ministry of Northern Development for some period of time.

The minister shakes his head, but I can tell him that we were there. Our caucus was in Sudbury from 3 to 5 April. It certainly was public knowledge long before our visit there that this \$1-million funding was coming.

I think the problem we have is exactly the problem that has been stated by the members who spoke before me, the problem I pointed out to the Minister of Health several weeks ago in the Legislature. Dr Corringham is very concerned that if the minister does not intervene and either bring pressure to bear, or exercise the authority she has under section 3 of the Health Disciplines Act to make the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario give the necessary accredi-

ation that is due, and I believe deserved, to Dr Ho and to Dr Bozek, who I understand has now left this country and gone back to England because he could not get certification here, this funding will mean absolutely nothing; that is if there are no people there to head the research foundation at the oncology clinic for northeastern Ontario.

Again, we ask the minister to use her good offices to intervene and see to it that Dr Ho and Dr Bozek can be accredited so that the cancer treatment centre for northeastern Ontario can indeed become a reality.

ORAL QUESTIONS

HEALTH INSURANCE

Mr B. Rae: The Treasurer himself has contributed to an enormous amount of speculation this weekend with respect to the budget plans he has for next week; in particular, the statements he made with respect to a tax on payroll to replace and indeed even add more revenues to the Ontario revenue system than would otherwise be the case from Ontario health insurance plan premiums.

Given that there is a general consensus in Ontario that OHIP premiums are extremely regressive, I wonder why the Treasurer would be contemplating the introduction of a tax at this stage of the business cycle, when he himself has said we are in danger of heading into a recession, when there is very substantial evidence that a tax on payroll of 1.5 per cent, 2 per cent or 2.5 per cent would be an incentive for employers not to hire and not to pay their employees any more money. Why would he be contemplating that kind of tax?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I hope the honourable member is aware that the comments made in response to questions from the media were not an indication of anything that is in the budget. They were in response to questions put to me; for example, about the commitment this party has made for a number of years now. We do agree that the approach to funding medicare from premiums is regressive and we have indicated that when we feel we can we will phase them down and eliminate them. In each of the previous four budgets, when asked about that promise, we have said the promise stands and that we will fulfil it when we feel we can.

This has led a number of thoughtful media people to say: "If you're going to do it, what about increases in personal income tax? What about an increase in corporation tax? What about a new lottery?"—I thought that was a very interesting suggestion—"What about a payroll

tax?" since I have already indicated Mr Wilson will not provide any flexibility in the personal income tax collection agreement, a matter the honourable member raised in question period last week.

Mr B. Rae: This is not an academic discussion. Is the Treasurer telling us he is going to give us an assurance today that he is not contemplating the introduction of a payroll tax?

Hon R. F. Nixon: No.

Mr B. Rae: Let me try again then. There are studies available saying that a payroll tax of the size that, in response to questions, is apparently being contemplated will increase unemployment and is not a progressive tax as it will affect the take-home pay of many employees and employers will be reluctant to offer their employees any more money in bargaining because they are going to get taxed on it.

I wonder if the Treasurer could at least give us this assurance: Mr Wilson let the banks off free and Mr Wilson let the speculators off free. Instead of toying around with a payroll tax on small business in this province, I wonder why the Treasurer is not looking at a tax on speculation and why he is not looking at a tax on our financial institutions in order to get him off this OHIP premium roulette wheel.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Although I find it a contrary indication, one of the pieces of paper that might be associated with such a review is the fact that the New Democratic Party government in Manitoba used this as an innovative way to pay for its costs of government.

The Deputy Speaker: New question.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Question.

Mr B. Rae: I was only going to say, "Don't cry for me, Manitoba," Mr Speaker.

BRIDGE REPAIRS

Mr B. Rae: My question is for the Premier in the absence of the Minister of Transportation (Mr Fulton). The Premier will no doubt have seen, or if he has not seen it I will inform him about it, a very disturbing article in the Toronto Star today in which a senior member of the Ministry of Transportation is quoted, as is a recently retired member of the public service, Ken Kleinstein.

Mr Kleinstein is quoted as saying that there are several bridges, indeed dozens of bridges, in the province that are in dangerously bad repair. The article says, "Some bridges are so weak they legally shouldn't even have school buses crossing them," Kleinstein said, "but in some

cases, I'd have to say they are (being used by school buses)."

I wonder if the Premier can explain how this disastrous state of affairs could have happened in the province.

Hon Mr Peterson: I will advise my honourable colleague of the member's questions in this regard and I am sure he will be happy to make a full report to him.

1410

Mr B. Rae: The evidence that is given, again not by members of the New Democratic Party in particular but indeed by senior public servants, is that, quoting again from the article, "the problem bridges have been caught short by provincial limits on road and bridge repair subsidies, Holowka said." Mr Holowka is now the Ministry of Transportation's head of bridge approval.

Can the Premier explain why he would have brought in a policy of cutbacks? He turns around and blames the feds for their cutbacks; before they even do that, he does exactly the same thing to municipalities. The evidence now from his own staff and from retired members of the public service is that this is not simply something which is saving money to the province; it is something threatening the health and safety of the people of this province, because of the threat to the infrastructure and to bridges which people have to travel over.

Hon Mr Peterson: I think my honourable friend's facts are wrong with respect to the transfers and with respect to the support for roads, bridges and infrastructure. As I said, I will tell my honourable colleague of his concerns and he will report to him fully.

Mr B. Rae: If I could just recount the absurdity of this situation. Leroy Smith, who lives in Elgin county, had an accident back in 1981 and had to set up a business in his own home. He then found that the Tates Bridge, which was right next to his house and which in fact was the access to his house, had to be closed because it was no longer safe for travel. Mr Smith is now facing a situation where half of his business has been cut off. He is a disabled person in his own home. Half of his own business has been cut off. People have to travel an extra 30 or 40 miles to get to his home.

I wonder if the Premier would care to comment on this kind of situation in Elgin county. The situation is occurring throughout southwestern Ontario, as the Premier may or may not be aware. It is a very serious situation. It affects people's incomes. It affects people's livelihood. It also

affects people's health and safety. That is the impact of the freeze, which he imposed well before Michael Wilson did anything up in Ottawa.

Hon Mr Peterson: The member for Middlesex (Mr Reycraft) tells me that this bridge is jointly owned by the counties of Middlesex and Elgin and that it was condemned, I gather, by the local county engineers.

As I said, I will take my honourable friend's comments and refer them to the minister. I will tell him of his desire to increase spending and cut taxes all at the same time.

CONTAMINATED FUEL

Mr Brandt: My question is to the Minister of the Environment. The minister will be aware that in an article that appeared today in the *Globe and Mail* a statement was made to the effect that hazardous toxic waste was being blended with fuel oil and sold illegally in Ontario. Last month, the Ministry of the Environment staff conducted a series of what were called crackdowns on illegal waste at various border points between Canada and the United States. I wonder if the minister can tell us if his staff were checking for the illegal shipments of this kind of blended toxic fuel; and if they were not checking for it why they were not checking for it.

Hon Mr Bradley: The staff of our investigation and enforcement branch, of course, has been conducting investigations for some period of time now. I know the member would not want me to go into the intricate detail of those investigations because, having been a minister, he will know he does not want to adversely impact upon those investigations. But I can tell him that at the border raids and at previous border checks we had looked at a variety of problems that we anticipated. For instance, involved in these checks was primarily the Ministry of the Environment investigations and enforcement branch, but also the Ontario Provincial Police was involved.

In addition to that, we had co-operation from the American authorities on both sides of the border; when we did it with New York state, for instance, and when we did it with Michigan as well, we had co-operation from them. We funnelled information to all relevant departments of government related to that which was being checked. I can say in a general sense to the member that we looked at virtually every possible violation that could be occurring upon the crossing of a border.

Mr Brandt: I too am aware of the fact that there have been co-operative undertakings between the OPP and the Environmental Protection Agency in the United States as well as his own ministry, but as the minister is probably aware, it has been suggested that these particular shipments have been going on for some time now.

The burning of this particular type of blended fuel, when mixed with the toxic contaminants that are contained in that particular fuel, does emit dioxins and furans. It is extremely dangerous. Why was there never any word from his ministry with respect to this matter, any checks that have been made or any investigation that has been carried out? And why did it have to take a *Globe and Mail* reporter to identify this entire matter having taken place between the United States and Canada? Why was his ministry not up on it?

Hon Mr Bradley: The member would know, in fact, that there had been some considerable public interest in both the checks that took place in the member's own riding, Sarnia, and Port Huron, Windsor and Detroit; then along the Niagara River and the St Lawrence River, and that there was a revelation of what we were looking for. Of course, the desire is to build that kind of deterrent effect that I know the member himself would want to see.

I can tell him that the most recent investigations took place on 11 April to 13 April at all the Niagara River crossings, and on 18 and 20 April at the St Lawrence River crossings. We checked 383 trucks. There were, first of all, over 40 enforcement officers on the site involved in the operation. We checked the trucks for waste and fuel haulers. I think that gets into the general area the member was interested in. We took 113 samples for more detailed analysis, which we thought would be important. The first results of the more detailed analysis are now coming in.

For instance, I was at the Queenston one. I was looking at a steel hauler coming across the border, and at the time where there was steel one could see some liquid coming out of the bottom. It must have been liquid steel that the person was bringing across the border. That is one where we have found, in fact, that some material has been identified. Similarly, the Michigan check last year identified some of those problems.

I can tell the member that there were 18 charges laid on the spot for environmental offences. In addition to that, because it is interested in the condition of the vehicles, the OPP laid a number of charges as to transportation as per the Dangerous Goods Transportation Act.

I know that at Gananoque, for instance, two trucks were turned around and sent back because they did not have the proper papers to come across the border.

I know the member is particularly interested in all of these; and in his area he would be because it is a crossing point, and in all of Ontario he would be. We have in fact been investigating this for some period of time. We believe that we are building the kind of case which is going to be a very powerful case once we get to the courts.

Mr Brandt: Recently the minister issued a press release indicating that two shipments of pathological waste were in fact stopped at the border and were refused entry into Ontario. Pathological waste, in my view, is somewhat less severe than this type of toxic, contaminated blended gasoline and other fuel oils that appear to have been coming into Ontario, in that the long-term effects can be far more hazardous from this type of load.

I noticed nothing in the minister's statement, in the earlier press release, that indicated he had stopped this type of shipment. Now the minister is aware that there are thousands of dollars in profitability to anyone who wants to illegally engage in this kind of activity. The number of barrels of this type of contaminated oil that can be blended in with a truckload of oil or gasoline coming into Canada can produce a tremendously hazardous kind of substance.

It appears that either the ministry was asleep at the switch or the type of investigation the minister has been assuring us has been carried out has in fact not been carried out. We would not have known about this other than for a *Globe and Mail* story. What is his ministry planning on doing about it, and is he going to lay all of the necessary charges to all of the individuals involved in these cases?

1420

Hon Mr Bradley: First of all, I should address the comment the member made about pathological waste. I think there are a lot of people in this province and in this country who would think that pathological waste is indeed a serious matter when it is crossing the border. I do not think we should downplay that—I do not think the member was attempting to downplay it, quite frankly—but I want to assure people that we consider that to be an important waste as well.

I want to tell the member that we are of course in the process of an investigation. You do not tell the people you are investigating that you are investigating them. But people were aware, in fact, of the border checks that took place last year

along the St Clair River crossing, the Detroit River crossing and along the St Lawrence River and the Niagara River. Certainly there was considerable public interest and media interest in those. They are aware of some of the charges that were forthcoming from that and some of the further investigative work that is being done.

I can assure the member that, on an international basis, the co-operation of Michigan and New York has been very significant in terms of tracing the problems.

We will be in a situation where we will have people being checked at the border in some cases, checked at the truck stops where they must stop to be weighed, the weigh stations, and checked again at the places where they are bringing the stuff with which they are crossing the border.

We believe that a lot of the investigative work our investigations and enforcement branch is doing, along with a lot of other enforcement agencies, is going to pay off and the member will see that very soon.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Mr Brandt: I want to get back to the Treasurer and the possibility of a payroll tax. The Treasurer did say in response to a media question, and I quote him directly, "We've talked about the possibility," as it relates to this payroll tax. Since the Treasurer indicated that "We've talked about the possibility" and that it is at least a matter under consideration by him and his ministry for inclusion in either this or an upcoming budget at some future point, knowing how carefully he reviews all of the matters and the details that are included in his budget, would he share with this House any studies he has taken on what the impact would be of the inclusion of this two per cent or more payroll tax he is now speculating about?

Hon Mr Kerrio: Do you have a fishing licence, Andy?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I appreciate the interjection from my honourable friend, which is much more useful than what is passing through my own mind.

I think the honourable member indicated in his question quite clearly that I had said we had talked about the tax. We do not keep tapes for publication of our discussions around the boardroom table, but I can assure the member that any public documents that are now available or might possibly be available in the future will be public documents.

Mr Brandt: I want, hopefully with this question, to dissuade the Treasurer from even considering this type of regressive tax. I would like to share with the Treasurer the fact that 92 per cent of all new businesses are made up of groups that have under 20 employees in total. Of all the jobs created in Ontario, as the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr Kwinter) is so well aware, 60 per cent are created by these small businesses that have under 20 employees. By definition, they are very small firms indeed.

These 372,000 small businesses would have to pay for this new payroll tax, if the Treasurer decides to introduce it. I am suggesting, by way of this question, that he should not decide to introduce it. Many of those 372,000 businesses are not profitable. They do not make a profit now. They would lose even more money under his proposal to bring in any form of payroll tax.

The Deputy Speaker: The question is?

Mr Brandt: I am glad you asked me, Mr Speaker, because I was just getting to it. Has the Treasurer considered the impact that such a payroll tax would have on marginal small businesses in Ontario?

Hon R. F. Nixon: We have also considered the difficulty in financing an expanded requirement for medicare, which the honourable member and all members support. They realize that the residents of Ontario require and very properly demand a high level of service from their medical practitioners and hospitals.

The honourable member will also be aware that, under the policy of the Progressive Conservative government of Canada, our revenue from federal Treasury sources has been substantially reduced in its rate of growth over the last few years and that we are close to \$1.1 billion short of the money we normally would have had in support of this rapidly growing program.

The Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) does, as the member would agree, an exemplary job of administering our medicare program in the most efficient and practical way. But even under those circumstances, it is growing at a rate of 10 to 11 per cent on a base that is close to \$14 billion.

The honourable member, day by day, brings to the attention of the Minister of Health the inadequacies of funding. I agree that we should, and must, have in the future a stronger basis for that kind of financing. We know what Michael Wilson has done to us, we know the rate of growth of our requirements for medical service, and so I think the honourable member might give us some concrete proposals as to how we could

improve the financing of medicare. He has indicated how we should not do it.

Mr Brandt: The Treasurer points out that there is a slowdown in the transfer grants from the federal government to the provincial government. I would point out to the Treasurer that a good portion of the money that he claims to have lost from the federal government he has made up as a direct result of no transfers to municipalities in certain categories. They have been able to determine that some \$700 million in shortfalls has taken place as a result of zero increases in categories like the unconditional grant program.

I would like to say to the Treasurer that at the very time when most of the economic prognostications would point to somewhat slower economic growth for Ontario and for Canada, at least over the short term, and that this impact will have a very direct relationship to the level of consumer spending that will take place in the economy over the next while, does he not see the relationship between his proposed tax—if he does bring it in in his budget—and the problems that industries and businesses are already going to have with the slowdown in the economy? Can he not see that those two factors will work to create shutdowns, job losses and an acceleration in the slowdown of the economy as a result of that?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member certainly makes a good point, and that is the sort of thing that has to be considered by the Treasurer and the people who advise him, whether it is myself or another person. It is simply difficult to know how to fund the programs in a jurisdiction like Ontario, where there is rapidly expanding requirement and cost even for the programs that are established now, without moving into an area of new and alternative processes.

It is a matter of judgement, and there are many alternatives that could be used. We could even increase the premiums themselves. Other jurisdictions have done that. But in a previous exchange with the Leader of the Opposition (Mr B. Rae), I agreed with him that the premiums themselves are regressive. Of course, the commitment made by our party on the formation of the government stands, and we have never indicated that we do not intend to keep it.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Miss Martel: I have a question for the Minister of Labour concerning Bill 162. Mrs Desjardin appeared in Windsor before the standing committee on resources development and told this story. She was hurt in 1985 at Dainty Foods while lifting a 50-pound bag of rice. After

three wrist operations, doctors at Downsview Rehabilitation Centre told her there was nothing more that could be done and she was awarded a 14 per cent pension, which equals \$140 a month.

While at Downsview, she received a vocational assessment and was told she was good working with numbers. Having no money except for her monthly pension, she applied to the Workers' Compensation Board for a supplement to make up her lost wages. She was told she could be a bookkeeper and earn \$337 a week. As this was more than the \$230 a week she had earned while at Dainty Foods, she was not given any money at all from the Workers' Compensation Board, nor was she retrained in order to become a bookkeeper.

I would like to ask the minister how Bill 162 will protect Mrs Desjardin and others who suffer under this current practice of deeming at the board?

Hon Mr Sorbara: I think my friend the member for Sudbury East will realize that the example that she raised here in question period is probably one that we will be able to discuss and expand on as we move through clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 162, but I could just give her a foretaste of the discussions as I think they are going to unfold.

In the bill as it is currently drafted, the requirement of the board is to ensure that considerations of ability to earn post-injury are based on the suitability and availability of employment. I think we are going to have good discussions on how we can refine those words to ensure that the board uses good judgement rather than simply arbitrarily considering that a worker is able to earn so much money at such-and-such a job.

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In that regard, I want to tell my friend the member for Sudbury East that those determinations, as they are set out in the current act, allow the policy simply to be determined by the board. In Bill 162, as it is currently constituted, the parameters within which the board would work, the context in which it would exercise its judgement, would be set out in regulations which would be passed by the government and subject to the scrutiny of this Parliament.

Miss Martel: We will be raising other cases besides Mrs Desjardin's during the course of this sitting.

Let me say that when questioned, groups from the labour movement, the injured workers groups and the legal clinics said, first, that the current practice of deeming is enshrined in this bill,

giving it the stamp of approval from the government. Second, there are no protections at all in the current bill to stop the practice. Third, when told that the protections from workers would come via the regulations written by the board, none of those groups was very happy or comfortable. They said that all that would do would be to expand the process and the current practice of deeming even further.

The Deputy Speaker: And the question is?

Miss Martel: Why is the minister so intent on putting in place this unfair and unjust system, as it now currently works at the board, which will only be given the stamp of approval under his new bill?

Hon Mr Sorbara: If the member is suggesting that we are putting into place a system which will allow what she refers to as deeming, I simply want to tell her that I believe she is wrong and I look forward to discussing the particular provisions in committee. I said at the outset that if we need to refine the language, I look forward to that process in committee.

As to her question of why we are proceeding, it is for the very same reason that the New Democratic government in Saskatchewan proceeded in 1979. It is for the very same reason that some five years ago, the government in Quebec instituted a dual award system and that other governments in Canada have done that, with the sole difference that the bill here in Ontario is far more generous and far more responsive to the needs of injured workers than any legislation that stands as a precedent.

LOT LEVIES

Mr Harris: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. Last December, I asked the minister what impact a proposed lot levy tax would have on housing in Ontario. She was unable to provide me with an answer at that time because, incredibly, no impact analysis had been done when the discussion paper was released.

It is now pretty clear that the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) is going to go ahead with this housing tax. Given the time that has gone by and the obvious commitment of this government to proceed, I again ask the minister if an impact analysis has been done and, if so, if she is prepared to share that analysis with this House.

Hon Ms Hošek: The member opposite knows that this entire question is being considered by the Treasurer and Minister of Economics, and I suggest that the member ask him that question.

Mr Harris: Since the minister does not particularly want to redirect the question, I will

come back with a supplementary to the minister, because I am absolutely astounded that, as the ministry responsible for housing, her ministry is not doing impact studies on this or has no knowledge of impact studies being done.

This new housing supply tax is expected to be about \$165 million next year. Given the 50-to-1 ratio of existing homes to new ones—I have checked these figures with the industry—if the \$165-million figure is the right one, it will now add \$8 billion to the affordability of the existing stock of housing in this province.

Again, I would ask the minister why, if she has not done an impact study for the Treasurer, with her vested interest in housing she has not undertaken a study of what this tax means to housing affordability.

Hon Ms Hošek: The member opposite knows very well the concern I have about housing affordability in this province and the variety of policy levers and others that we have undertaken to address it. What I said in the first question was that this work is being done. All questions of taxation are being done by the Ministry of Treasury and Economics, as is appropriate. I think it is inappropriate for the member opposite to assume that all of us in this cabinet are not concerned about every major decision that is made in this province and its impact on all the people of the province.

I understand the member opposite was for a while a member of cabinet and does understand something about cabinet government. What we have done in the province is made sure that many of the sources of power we have to make sure that people have housing choices are being used, and I think the member opposite should ask this question of the Ministry of Treasury and Economics.

CHILD CARE

Ms Poole: My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services, concerning child care in Metropolitan Toronto. As the minister is aware, Metro council estimated there would be a \$28.4-million shortfall this year in funding for new day care centres, because of higher costs in the Metro area. Council has reacted by approving a rate increase of only four per cent to day care operators, rather than the 10 per cent they originally deemed necessary.

Advocates and parents alike fear that the latest decision will further threaten the supply of affordable child care in Metro Toronto. May I ask the minister how Metro Toronto's decision

will impact the province's ability to meet the targets set under New Directions for Child Care?

Hon Mr Sweeney: The targets we set two years ago, which are now in the third year of implementation, have not only been met but in fact have been exceeded, and that is right across the province, including here in Metro Toronto. I would draw to the honourable member's attention that with the additional 1,000 subsidized spaces which Metro has agreed to accept from the province this year, its total number of subsidized spaces since 1985 has grown from roughly 10,000 up to 19,000. That is almost a doubling.

I would also point out to the honourable member that the total amount of dollars which we have flowed to Metro in terms of increases for this year would be in the neighbourhood of 4 per cent to 4.5 per cent. So I can only presume that Metro is realizing, as the province has realized, that it has to manage with the resources that are available for it. It simply cannot go out and accept higher and higher costs when it does not have the resources to meet those higher and higher costs.

Ms Poole: I have a supplementary about the rate increases. In 1988 and 1989, Metro asked for rate increases in purchase-of-service centres that are much greater than the cost-of-living increases provided by the province. The reason given was the need to raise the salaries of day care teachers.

While I am very sympathetic to that cause, does the minister feel that Metro's position is justified, given the other enormous pressures we have on day care in Toronto?

Hon Mr Sweeney: The honourable member will be aware of the fact that day care advocates in the various municipalities came to us a few years ago and indicated to us the dilemma between the need to raise the incomes of day care workers and the impact that would have, the increase in fees to parents who would be unable to afford them. On the basis of that, this government decided in 1988 to allocate across Ontario \$60 million in direct grants to day care centres. Of that, \$16 million went to Metro and that \$16 million resulted in an average increase to day care workers of \$3,500 annually.

That still means we have a way to go, but that was a very significant increase in one year. That same amount of money will flow this year with a cost-of-living increase, and the whole intent of that was to enable the day care centres in Metro to raise their salaries without impacting upon the fees to parents. If they choose to raise them even more beyond that, then that is something they are going to have to find in terms of those resources.

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UNCONDITIONAL GRANTS

Mr Pouliot: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The minister will be aware that on 12 December 1988 his government opted to freeze the grants to Ontario municipalities at their 1988 level; in other words, no increase on unconditional grants to municipalities across Ontario for 1989. The minister should be cognizant that while hurting all municipalities in Ontario, that kind of impact is more severely felt up north, where people are talking now in terms of \$80 per household in municipal taxes just to cover the rate of some 4.6 per cent inflation.

Will the minister make the commitment that he will hand the tools over, in other words adjust the unconditional grants so that the municipalities can provide in a more fair and equitable fashion the essential services that are so badly needed, especially in the northern part of the province?

Hon Mr Eakins: I think we have pointed out on a number of occasions that the unconditional grants are simply one form of helping municipalities. There are many other ways of assisting municipalities. My colleague the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr O'Neil) announced another \$7 million today.

The unconditional grants have been held at the same; they have not been reduced. The member must remember that the conditional grants have been increased generally across the province by some 5.4 per cent.

I would say to the member that we have also set up with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario a means of reviewing the conditional and unconditional grants, taking into consideration the remarks the Provincial Auditor made in his report.

Mr Pouliot: When the minister mentions so candidly that those unconditional grants represent only a portion, surely he must be aware that they represent a larger portion than what he has in mind. We are talking here about 20.8 per cent of the cost of operating a municipality for general purposes.

Consequently, the people of the north are getting a little tired of being the fall guys on the basis that the government is not honouring its commitment. What we are asking the minister to do is just to come across clean and say, "Yes, I will do what is right and I will increase those unconditional grants by the rate of inflation every year."

Hon Mr Eakins: The honourable member knows that I have visited the north many times. I

was there last weekend, and I am sure he was there. I will be there this weekend. I am delighted to see also that this weekend the Provincial Auditor is on the program at the meeting of the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities in Blind River.

The member will remember too that in reviewing our grants we have to consider some of the areas that the auditor pointed out to us. For instance, the auditor said that too many municipalities received the resource equalization grant and therefore should be re-examined. He also pointed out, and this is one of the reasons he is going to be in Blind River this weekend, that the northern support grant warrants reassessment.

We believe that the north requires the 18 per cent assistance that is received from this government, and even though the auditor has asked that this be reviewed, I can assure the honourable member that in meeting with the people, we are considering many of the concerns they have raised and we are going to make sure that the northern people are looked after as well as anywhere else. I can assure the member of that.

INSURANCE COMPANY BANKRUPTCY

Mr Runciman: I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations about the Guardall bankruptcy. I asked the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr Elston) last week, but he professed ignorance and fobbed it off on the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, indicating that he was carrying out a complete investigation of this matter.

The Deputy Speaker: Question?

Mr Runciman: Undoubtedly the minister is aware that the demise of this company has left thousands and thousands of Ontario motorists out in the cold. They purchased extended warranty contracts, something his ministry encourages consumers to do, and now those contracts are useless.

Will the minister tell the House why his government waited until March to shut down Guardall, since it had suspended the licence of Guardall's underwriting insurance company almost two months beforehand?

Hon Mr Wrye: That is a question on insurance, and I will refer it to the Minister of Financial Institutions.

Hon Mr Elston: First of all, I thank the honourable member for addressing the question in the way he did, because it gives me a chance, of course, to say he was wrong in indicating that I fobbed it off on anybody. I stood up and I indicated what had gone on.

I will tell the member again that with respect to his particular question, he would want to know that there was a different insurance company that was carrying on the sureties activities as of 1 January 1989. It was not Ontario General Insurance Co that was particularly writing new business at that time. That provides the member with at least a partial answer to his current question. I would ask him to have a little more precision in his preamble to his supplementary.

Mr Runciman: That kind of response is not going to provide much solace for the thousands of Ontario consumers who have lost millions of dollars over this fiasco.

Since the minister is now responding, we can deal with the insurance company angle of this. His ministry was notified by the president of Symons General Insurance twice when Mr Ravinsky took over the books and control of that company, a gentleman with no experience in operations of an insurance company, a man who, just four years previous to buying this company, had gone personally bankrupt, and I have some other questions with respect to his personal history which I will not get into this afternoon.

The minister allowed this gentleman to buy the company and that is open to question, but the failure to monitor its operations following his purchase defies explanation. The trustee says that \$12 million has been improperly removed from this company and thousands of consumers, people his colleague is supposed to protect, were left out in the cold. It seems to me the government was negligent if not incompetent in respect to this. There is some degree of responsibility upon the minister's shoulders.

I am just wondering if the government is considering participating in any compensation to the thousands of consumers who have lost money in this fiasco.

Hon Mr Elston: The honourable gentleman should know, if he does not already know, that the department of insurance does not have a veto on who purchases insurance companies on the basis of the sort of background material he has provided.

We do take a look at the material that has an ongoing effect on the operation of the company. I can tell the honourable gentleman, if he and his colleagues care to listen, that there was a five-year management deal that had been worked out by a company which manages not only the insurance company that was subject to winding up, but also other ongoing insurance companies.

Mr Runciman: They left in 1987 and notified your ministry twice and you didn't do anything about it.

Hon Mr Elston: I can tell the honourable gentleman that from my point of view he is not accurate when he says that there was negligence on the part of the insurance people in the Ministry of Financial Institutions.

The short answer to the question about who is compensating is that the honourable gentleman would like to know that the activities of the receiver who has been appointed are ongoing and that he is looking to the assets as to sufficiency with respect to meeting the ongoing needs of the company. The member is obviously trying to stir up problems before there are indications that problems are actually in existence.

WORKPLACE HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INFORMATION SYSTEM

Mr Elliot: My question is to the Minister of Labour. In the latter part of last year this government introduced the workplace hazardous materials information system or, as it is better known, WHMIS.

The backbone of this legislation was the recognition of the worker's right to know what types of materials he or she was dealing with and what to do if there was a problem. In order to comply with the worker's right to know, a key component of the WHMIS legislation involved the production and distribution of educational materials that were paid for by the Ministry of Labour. As I understand it, these materials were developed to ensure that workers recognized and understood what WHMIS meant to them.

Would the minister please clarify for this House what the role of his ministry was in the production of these materials, and does he consider that money well spent?

Hon Mr Sorbara: I want to thank the member for Halton North who, as a distinguished educator, takes an interest in the WHMIS program and I want to thank him for advising me that he was going to raise this matter in the House.

I think his question really is twofold. The first is, how were funds provided? What role did the Ministry of Labour play in the development of the WHMIS package?

What we did, I tell my friend the member for Halton North, is provide a grant to the Occupational Health and Safety Education Authority of the Workers' Compensation Board. The reason we did that is because that board is really a tripartite body made up of representatives from labour, business and the workers' compensation system. So it has all the stakeholders in the workplace there.

The development of those materials has been a phenomenal success. They have been made available to large and small businesses. Some of the largest enterprises in Ontario have used these materials for the delivery of the WHMIS program in their workplaces. Indeed, there are businesses from all over Canada—WHMIS is really a Canadian initiative—that are now asking Ontario to use these materials, so they have been in big businesses, small businesses, community projects. They really have been everywhere.

By the way, I should add that the grant, which if memory serves me well was about \$400,000, has provided as well for the training of instructors who are available to small businesses to implement WHMIS, the workplace hazardous materials information system.

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Mr Elliot: I have a supplementary. I also understand these educational materials have sold very well indeed and have in fact become very popular with manufacturers, as the minister just said, despite the presence of alternative educational programs available from the private sector.

Would the minister tell this House what the ministry plans to do with the excess funds generated by the surprising popularity of these materials? Will it use these funds to provide further training in either related or separate areas of occupational health and safety, which is so urgently needed by the working people of Ontario?

Hon Mr Sorbara: The member for Halton North points out that this is really very good news for the government, because having made this investment in producing materials for educational purposes and providing them to workplace parties at a very low cost, we have actually made a substantial profit.

I want to point out that the profit is not directly the property of the Ministry of Labour. As I said, we provided a grant to the Occupational Health and Safety Education Authority, and now the authority, which is made up of representatives of labour and management, is considering how it can utilize these funds and leverage these funds to enhance even further the WHMIS training package.

They are thinking of things like the generation of third-language training materials and the use of programming on TVOntario to deliver the safety message of WHMIS even further. There are a variety of other things, but suffice it to say that it will be an administrative decision of the health and safety authority of the board that will

be the final determiner of how those moneys are used.

HOME CARE

Mr D. S. Cooke: I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services regarding the outreach and attendant care program funded by his ministry.

I would like to ask the minister about two specific cases. Rita Dupuis of my riding has had multiple sclerosis for 15 years. For 10 of those years she has been in a wheelchair. She was recently in the hospital and released from hospital after rehabilitation on the understanding that she would have home support programs through the outreach program run by the Cerebral Palsy Association of Windsor and Essex County.

Scott Mikec is age 18. He is quadriplegic. He was in hospital for a year receiving rehab, and was released and went home on the condition that he would be receive assistance at home so he could get ready to go to school.

Both of these people are at home now and they are on a waiting list for the outreach program. They have been on the waiting list for several months. It looks like they are going to be on the waiting list for several more months, since no new additional money has been added to this program by the ministry.

What can we make of the minister's commitment to home support programs when people like this, hundreds of them, are in need of service and the ministry will not provide it?

Hon Mr Sweeney: I would like to make one correction to the member's comment. The outreach program in his area began, I believe, in 1986, with an initial grant of about \$40,000. The money flowing to that same agency two years later, this immediate past fiscal year, was \$149,000. I suggest that is pretty close to a fourfold increase in dollars.

As the honourable member knows, the individual agency is responsible for taking those dollars and deciding where they are best allocated. That is not my decision to make. It is incorrect to say that no new money has gone. A very significant amount of new money has gone.

Mr D. S. Cooke: The minister did not answer the question at all. He can throw out his figure of \$149,000, but the fact of the matter is that if Scott were back in the hospital and if Rita were back in the hospital, the cost to this government to keep only these two people in an institution would be more than the entire budget for this outreach program at the Cerebral Palsy Association of Windsor and Essex County.

I would simply like to ask the minister how anyone in this province can believe his government has a commitment to community-based home support programs to keep people out of institutions when deserving people like this are on waiting lists for years and have no prospect of getting assistance. The fact of the matter is that in this program alone more people are on the waiting list than are being served.

Hon Mr Sweeney: I would suggest to the honourable member that when he talks about waiting lists for years, that is a slight exaggeration. He suggested himself that we are talking of a couple of months. I would also draw to the member's attention that when the agency indicated to us it had some priority cases, we gave it in addition to the money I spoke of before an additional \$20,000 to deal with its priority list. It is up to them to decide how to allocate that priority list for an additional \$20,000.

ST LAWRENCE SQUARE

Mr Harris: I have another question for the Minister of Housing concerning the St Lawrence Square housing development. Given the minister's stated goal of 6,000 to 7,000 units and having units ready by 1990—this was when she made the splashy announcement about a year ago—I wonder if the minister could update us today vis-à-vis the status of this project on the environmental cleanup and vis-à-vis the total cost per unit of those 6,000 to 7,000 units in that area.

Hon Ms Hošek: I am glad the member opposite is interested in that particular development. I think everybody in the province was interested and continues to be. The commitment we made at the time of announcing the provincial role in that project was that we would not allow any housing to be built on land that was not environmentally safe. As a result, there is a commitment to make sure the environmental cleanup will take place. Whatever is required to be done to make that a very safe location for housing will be completed.

In order to do that, we estimated the costs involved in the environmental work on that site. The city is overseeing that entire process, while the province has promised the resources in the form of a loan guarantee to allow that cleanup and also for the entire project to continue.

Mr Harris: The question was, what impact will that have on the total cost per unit? One of the things we have concerns about is that these announcements the minister makes make for good headlines, but they are made in isolation of

the total overall planning that should be going on and the cost-effectiveness of what she is doing.

I will ask the minister again whether she has an update as to what the per unit cost is proposed to be there. If she is doing any kind of planning at all, given that she must now have some idea what that per unit cost is, can the minister tell us what degree of subsidization will be required to ensure that her goal of 60 per cent of those units being affordable is in fact going to be realized?

Hon Ms Hošek: The member should know that when that project was put together, it involved an enormous amount of very careful work on the part of a large number of ministries, including of course the Ministry of the Environment. It is impossible for us to estimate the actual cost of building because it will take place in stages. However, the development has been proposed on a break-even basis using existing government programs. This government has made a commitment through the nonprofit housing program, and that commitment represents \$215 million from nonprofit housing for subsidies in that project over a long period of time.

The member opposite can rest assured that our commitment to making sure housing gets built is very solid and clear. We are going to continue to work together with the municipality to make sure that housing gets built. It is going to involve continuous work. It is already taking place right now. Let me assure the honourable member, since I know he is really concerned about this question, that this land will be environmentally clean and safe when the housing gets built.

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HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Mr Adams: My question is for the Minister of Education. Fitness levels seem to be improving in Ontario, but I am concerned about the health and fitness of our young people. Is his ministry doing enough to improve the health of students in Ontario?

Hon Mr Ward: I want to thank the honourable member for his question on this very important matter. The member will know that currently the new curriculum guideline on health and physical education is undergoing the final stages of validation. We expect that will be completed in the very near future and made available for use in our schools beginning next fall.

The member will also know that the guidelines for the primary and junior divisions make health and physical education mandatory. In addition,

in the intermediate division in grades 7 and 8, 80 hours of physical education per year are mandatory as well. It is true, though, that boards do have the opportunity in terms of specific time allotments during the primary and junior divisions, and frankly the emphasis is very much on individual wellness, on encouraging students to make the right choices for a healthy lifestyle. We do recognize the importance of quality physical education in our schools for all age groups.

Mr Adams: I thank the minister for that comprehensive reply. It seems that frequency of exercise is important. It is often suggested that exercise three times each week is necessary for cardiovascular fitness. Does the ministry take frequency of exercise into account?

Hon Mr Ward: The ministry, through the guidelines, certainly encourages establishing an appropriate regimen for each child. In fact, it identifies that a regimen of at least three times a week is the most appropriate. Many boards in this province, the Wentworth County Board of Education for instance, have quality physical education daily. Certainly, that is an approach that is very much encouraged.

FLOODING

Mr B. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Natural Resources. Together with a lot of other people, I am sure, I was expecting him to make a statement today on the evacuation of two communities on the banks of the Albany River, the communities of Fort Albany and Kashechewan. I want to ask the minister exactly what is going on in these communities. How many people have been moved out and how long does he expect they will be away from their communities?

Hon Mr Kerrio: I certainly would have made a statement if there were grave danger or the need to declare it some kind of emergency. The fact of the matter is that the past Saturday they evacuated some 1,000 people. They have been transferred to Moosonee and Moose Factory. There are about 100 left in the two communities.

I think everything is well under control. We will be monitoring that whole evacuation and when it is appropriate to move people back. I am very pleased if the Leader of the Opposition, having visited the north, has that kind of concern. We have been very much involved in the past. Witness the kind of record this government has with this situation. We moved a whole village and rebuilt a village upstream where they no longer have the kind of risks that exist here.

I want to tell the honourable member that we are monitoring it carefully. At this point in time, there is no great danger. A little bit of colder air swept in that tightened up the situation a little so that the flooding was held to somewhat of a minimum over the past 24 hours.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Hon Mr Kerrio: If there is an event that should be shared with honourable members here, I will be very pleased to do it.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Mr B. Rae: I want to say to the minister that if there had been 1,000 people moved out of any other part of Ontario, he would have been on his feet at 1:30 o'clock this afternoon with a statement in this House. That is where he would have been.

I say to the minister, on behalf of the opposition parties, that I expect him to have a statement here tomorrow telling us exactly what the situation is, how many people have been moved out, what the conditions are in those communities, how bad the flooding is and what his plans are to make sure people do not have to be moved 200 or 300 miles in order to deal with a situation that should be dealt with. Flooding ought to be able to be controlled. As I say, if it took place in any other community in this province, he would have been on his feet making that kind of statement and he knows it.

Hon Mr Kerrio: I reject those comments categorically. The member does not know what he is talking about. That watershed on the Albany River is a watershed that neither the member nor anyone else can control. It is flat and when the ice moves in and stops the discharge of the water—these things happen very regularly in that environment.

Certainly, I would make some comment if it was 1,000 people who were moved for the first time. This is not the case. We are very careful to protect our natives when there is fire, when there are floods and when there is a need to evacuate them, but the member should not tell me that I am doing something quite different from the norm because I will not accept that.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. There are a lot of private conversations. The House is still going on.

PETITIONS

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Miss Martel: I have a petition addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the

Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to reform the workers' compensation system in Ontario so that people injured at work get decent pensions, rehabilitation and jobs when they are able."

It is signed by 66 people from the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 24. I have affixed my signature to it and I agree with them entirely.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: There are still many private conversations.

HOME CARE

Mr McLean: I have a petition from the Victorian Order of Nurses, Simcoe county branch, and it is addressed to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We support the expansion of home care and visiting nurses services as the most cost-efficient mode of health care delivery and we therefore want our government to adequately fund the Victorian Order of Nurses."

I have spoken to the chap who took up the petition. He was well aware of the announcement on Friday, but he wants further funding.

MOTION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon Mr Conway moved that Mr Miclash and Mr Owen, Mr Dietsch and Mr Matrundola, and Mr Pouliot and Mrs Grier exchange places respectively in the order of precedence for private members' public business.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

CITY OF WINDSOR ACT, 1989

Mr D. S. Cooke moved first reading of Bill Pr9, An Act respecting the City of Windsor.

Motion agreed to.

CITY OF WINDSOR ACT, 1989

Mr D. S. Cooke moved first reading of Bill Pr11, An Act respecting the City of Windsor.

Motion agreed to.

MOTOR BOAT OPERATORS' LICENSING ACT, 1989

Mr McLean moved first reading of Bill 8, An Act to provide for the Licensing of Motor Boat Operators.

Motion agreed to.

Mr McLean: I have an explanatory note with regard to the bill. The bill, which applies only with respect to motor boats propelled by engines of at least 25 horsepower, prohibits the operation of such motor boats by any person who does not have a motor boat operator's licence.

The bill requires every person to carry a motor boat operator's licence while operating a motor boat to which the bill applies and to produce it when requested to do so by a police officer. If unable or unwilling to produce the licence, the motor boat operator is required to give the police officer his or her correct name and address.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Hon Mr Conway moved resolution 1.

Reading dispensed with [see Votes and Proceedings].

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

Hon Mr Conway moved resolution 2.

Reading dispensed with [see Votes and Proceedings].

Motion agreed to.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the amendment to the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Mr Mackenzie: I am pleased to participate in the debate on the government's throne speech. I guess I should start by simply saying I always have difficulty figuring just exactly what the throne speech is worth and how important it is in this Legislature. My own experience is that if there is a general debate that has a little more meaning and merit, it is the budget debate that will follow the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) bringing down his budget in another two or three weeks' time.

My feeling on the throne speech is mixed, mainly because I am not sure it means a heck of a lot. This time around in particular I was more than a little taken aback that this government did

not use the occasion to lay out a clear direction, a clear set of policies that it intended to follow and answer some of the criticisms being made of the government at this point in time.

The few measures contained in the speech are no big deal really. What is astounding is that after 19 months of what some would call drift, the government has so little to say, either regarding its own agenda or certainly regarding the needs of ordinary people and their families. We are sort of used to a government that talks a good line. Once again, I really think the Tories probably did a better job in the throne speech than this government has done.

They certainly have not responded, whether it is to injured workers seeking fairer treatment, teachers concerned with their pensions or municipalities facing immense challenges like garbage. This majority government has ignored the problem, it seems, and almost looks as though it is blaming the victim. I think there is an inadequate course being followed today.

The Liberals say they will reform social assistance, but what they have proposed is much less than the first phase of the Thomson report recommendations. Even here, they have hedged the commitment. They say progress will require co-operation from all three levels of government. Just exactly what does that mean? If we do not get it, is the first phase of the Thomson commission report down the drain or are parts of it down the drain?

Anybody, of course, who has followed the debate on this issue knows it has a life almost of its own. As important as all five phases are, we simply have to get on with the first phase, which sets the groundwork for improving people's lot in life in this province.

Coming just a couple of days before the federal budget and on the heels of a financial squeeze on municipalities, this throne speech really is a truly remarkable statement. The freeze on unconditional grants is only the most visible aspect of the fiscal squeeze imposed by the province. Others include the shifting of court security costs on to municipalities, underfunding of child care, freezing of road grants and a declining level of provincial support for education. The result is higher property taxes and a growing share of local revenues based on regressive taxes. That seems to be this province's contribution to tax justice, although of course we will not know finally until we actually see the budget.

On pollution, this government seems to have abandoned a polluter-pay policy in favour of a lottery. How symbolic of this government's

record: Environmental cleanup in Liberal Ontario is now part of a game of chance. As somebody has said, the scratch-and-sniff lottery, or there is another joke going the rounds of this place, that the prize you win is a dirty industry, if you win a Cleantario in the deal.

Liberals say that education is among their six priorities. Yet the latest figures show that the provincial share of education funding is at an historic low. Liberals say they will revitalize the elementary curriculum and restructure the secondary school program this session. The select committee on education made it clear that such measures are costly and require new money for class size, teacher retraining and improved counselling supports. Without the money, these can be empty gestures.

The Liberals say they will support apprenticeship and other training arrangements, to help workers overcome barriers to training and employment and to assist the re-employment efforts of workers affected by layoffs and plant closures. I think if we check this against reality, we will see that plants have closed because of the free trade agreement, and there will be more. Yet even with the federal government cutting a billion dollars from unemployment insurance benefits, Ontario has still not pledged an additional dime for retraining. Its only move has been in the workers' compensation and that has been all bad, a money-pinching scheme that will deprive thousands of workers of permanent pensions.

What was not even mentioned in this throne speech we went through? Car insurance, home care, housing, energy, the nursing shortage, the teacher shortage, post-secondary education, employment equity, the north, health and safety, pensions, employment standards; we could go on and on. We really have to wonder why there were so many things left out of it and so little in general or specific terms raised on the issues that are covered.

It seems to me that if we take a look at the priority area, economic development, the "primary emphasis" is defined as "improving education, training and adjustment programs." The specific objectives, and I think there were eight of them, are: pursuing new markets; targeting support to industries; supporting the growth of Ontario-based companies in the global economy; fostering an entrepreneurial culture; supporting apprenticeship and other training that combines education and on-the-job training; helping workers overcome barriers to training and employment; assisting the re-employment efforts of

workers, especially those affected by plant closures and layoffs—forgive my cynicism on that one—and addressing present and anticipated shortages of skilled workers.

The first four are standard Liberal rhetoric, and they reflect the view of successive throne speeches, the centres of excellence program, the work for the Premier's council. It is rather ironic that two world-class Ontario companies, Connaught Laboratories and Lumonics Software, are about to be taken over by foreign companies and without one single peep by this Peterson government. The last four items on this list, I suggest, are nothing but megahypocrisy.

The trade union movement and educators have been screaming about shortages of skilled workers and the inadequacy of apprenticeship and other job-related training for a decade. So far, this government has done little more than publish documents on the problem. There has certainly been no concerted effort to change things. As for assisting laid-off workers, check against delivery. When the federal government announced a billion-dollar cut in unemployment insurance benefits, most of which flows to workers in Ontario, this government had nothing to say.

Last session, when we pushed them specifically on assistance to workers facing job losses as a result of the free trade agreement, the Premier (Mr Peterson) said it was the federal government's problem and responsibility. During the last provincial election, they introduced Transitions, for old or laid-off workers, and to date it has been a monumental failure.

Plant closures are now occurring at an increasing rate and are as high now as at any time since the recession. There is not a day that I do not pick up the paper and find a new plant that is closing or thinking of closing in the province.

We have heard nothing from the industrial restructuring commissioner, even though this office was created by this Premier more than a year ago. The proportion of jobs in Ontario paying at or near the minimum wage has increased by more than 15 per cent since 1981. I have to seriously question the comments that have been made.

There are a number of other points in the throne speech that do not match up and could be criticized on a point-by-point basis, but I want to deal with a few other issues first.

1520

I was pleased to see the deficit of the Victorian Order of Nurses picked up. I think this is one of the areas where—well, I guess there are several

areas—the demographics of our province are clear. We have a rapidly growing older population in Ontario and that should give us some clear directions in terms of health care, of the need for home care and homemakers, of the need for Meals on Wheels and of the need for assistance to keep our older people in their homes as long as possible. I do not think it takes any particular brains to realize clearly that has to be a major focus of the government's direction.

Do we see it in terms of some of the social services that are provided? I do not think we would find the Red Cross saying it really sees it, and there are certainly a number of other organizations, one of them being the VON.

As happy as I am to see their deficit picked up, I note that that is all that was picked up. It does nothing with the ongoing funding problems they are going to have. With an annual budget of \$80 million, I think we can see the size and the scope of the VON operation and the need to make sure that this organization is able to move ahead.

If we want to shift the health care system away from institutions and towards community-based care, it has to be more than just rhetoric and it has to be the ongoing funding, not just getting an organization such as the VON out of an immediate hole of a \$2.5-million or \$3-million shortfall or deficit in its funding. I think we have simply got to see a response that has a heck of a lot more meat in it than that.

I could not help but be impressed by a letter I received just this past week from a gentleman who had really taken a serious look at the financial problems of the VON. He wrote a letter to me that I think says most of it. This gentleman is a prominent citizen in my riding, a QC, and he wrote the following letter to the Premier and sent a copy of it to me.

"Recently, I have discovered the ongoing situation financially with the Victorian Order of Nurses, Hamilton-Wentworth branch and the Ontario branch. It has been my privilege for the last 50 years to have been a member of all of the boards of the Hamilton-Wentworth branch, provincial branch and the Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada, having served in many offices and being a life member of both the Victorian Order of Nurses, Hamilton-Wentworth branch and a founding member of the Victorian Order of Nurses for Ontario.

"I hold this office in addition to a number of other offices within the community and feel compelled to express my feelings, both as a citizen of the province of Ontario but also because of the services which have been rendered

to my wife through the past two years by the Hamilton-Wentworth branch.

"When I was a founding member of the Victorian Order of Nurses, Ontario branch, I attended, on behalf of the then existing branch, on the departments in an effort to obtain assistance for the needs of what was then a very active and growing branch of the national office. It was my experience, along with the superintendent of the Ontario branch, to attend before the ministry and to request funds to assist the extension of the service.

"Ironically, at that time the government felt that \$10,000 was enough money to be given to the 52 then existing branches in Ontario and, as treasurer of the body, it was my duty to calculate the distribution of the \$10,000 among the then existing 52 branches. Needless to say, the amount allocated to each of the branches was very minimal.

"Through the years, the need of the Victorian Order of Nurses has grown and has relieved the hospital care of many patients, particularly after a protracted illness in hospital. Home care has entered into the picture to a great extent and the rendering of service of inestimable value.

"Personally, from my own experience, my wife suffered a very severe stay in the hospital over six weeks and then received nursing service for another two to three months upon her return home. She would have been one of those who would have had to attend outpatient attendance three or four times a week. Needless to say, such attendance would not only be expensive in so far as hospital care and attention was concerned but also expensive and difficult on her personally.

"The nurses who attended our home were understanding, capable and were evidence of the need for health service during the period of recovery. Personally, I cannot speak too highly of the service rendered, and this had been the first personal occasion for my having to call upon the VON in all of the years that I have served as a member of the board.

"With the greatest of respect, I would humbly submit that the government does not seem to see that VON is a service which might be called 'a hospital without walls'. The hospitals are a necessity for immediate care of ill patients, but VON is a hospital the cost of which when compared to hospital care and the lack of beds is beyond comprehension. It would appear that the department of health does not realize the true significance of the role that VON is playing and how many elderly citizens are being cared for in

their homes who ordinarily would be filling hospital beds.

"The services, in case you are not aware of them, in the particular branch to which I have the honour of being a member of the board of governors and life member, and an active member and also honorary solicitor, render not only nursing care, home care, home visiting, volunteer care, day care and many other services, as well as being a valuable go-between between the needy patient, who incidentally is never turned down for lack of money, and as an advertisement for care which the government is attempting, through some media, to illustrate cannot be replaced.

"I feel there is a misunderstanding on the part of the department of health in not supporting the needs of VON. As I understand it, at the present moment there is only provision for four per cent for the year 1988-89, whereas our request was for a seven per cent increase. Surely someone with an analytical mind can see that the VON cannot continuously have a deficit, which at the present moment is well in excess of \$2 million and will continue to grow.

"The ordinary patient cannot continue to pay greater fees than those that are being charged, and I would respectfully submit that there is a degree of indifference existing, and certainly not a realistic approach to a need that is so great, so money-saving to the government, and yet is not being recognized. It would appear that other sections of the country from time to time are receiving assistance via the various routes, department of highways, sports, even the dome stadium.

"If the health department wishes to practice what it preaches, particularly with various conditions existing at the present time such as AIDS, smoking, heart and lung disease and the multitude of other conditions, many of which are in fact being attended to under the aegis of the Victorian Order of Nurses and its various branches throughout the Dominion of Canada.

"Sir, you have been"—this is, of course, a letter directed to the Premier—"a resident of London, Ontario for many years and must have some knowledge of the work being carried on by the order there. If you would not, I would respectfully suggest that maybe it would be a good time to have a review of the situation as applicable to the London branch, keeping in mind the number of branches existing throughout the province for which you, sir, are the Premier and, I would hope, an advocate of health, not only through the medium of the department of health of the

province of Ontario but through its extended interests.

"There is possibly another factor of which you are not aware, but many of the senior citizens of Ontario are being served in their homes, whereas if there were not any nursing service, they would all be confined to nursing homes, which as you are aware, likewise are almost unavailable in many instances.

"As a practising solicitor, it is interesting to note in checking the columns of the *Hamilton Spectator* and the *Globe* that there are three times as many death notices contained in the *Spectator* and the *Globe* on an ordinary day as opposed to births. This should be some indication of the need for the elderly as well, and let us, with all sincerity, approach the future knowing full well that the people who have maintained the province of Ontario are now the senior citizens who need tender loving care and attention such as that given by the Victorian Order of Nurses.

"I am sure, from my own knowledge, that my grandchildren feel exactly the same way and that the senior citizens should be given the attention so badly required. We all realize there are certain limitations, but those limitations should be sorted out, and the ones that are really the major ones should not be limited.

"I realize this note has been much longer than I intended it to be, but I would ask you, sir, that you would personally consider the matter, and I would even deem it a privilege to receive your personal reply."

It seems to me that letter from a very prominent citizen in our community, and one who has all his life been involved, written to the Premier with an awful lot of feeling, is an indication of how most of the citizens in this province feel. Certainly the feeling is that we simply have to change our priorities. This throne speech certainly does not set that direction. I am not sure what we will see in the budget speech.

1530

As well, I want to deal with the St Peter's Hospital issue in my constituency. Folks at St Peter's had a study done by the ministry that verified their argument that it is receiving less per capita than comparable hospitals in Ontario. It is an institution that is extremely well thought of in our community.

They waited a long time, trying to get a meeting with the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) and an even longer time trying to argue out the needs they had to meet the requirements of St Peter's Hospital in Hamilton and to upgrade the standards in the work they are doing, which is

rather remarkable. Their request was for \$2.6 million. They were a long, long time in getting a response. They actually got 19 per cent of this \$2.6 million in each of two years. The funding is simply not enough.

In 1987, when the request for enhanced funding was first initiated, comparable facilities in Ontario were funded at a level to provide the equivalent of 60 minutes' more services per patient per day. The increased funding awarded St Peter's will allow only 10 minutes' additional therapy and services per patient per day each year over the next two years.

On 28 April, the hospital wrote to the Minister of Health stating quite clearly that the amount of enhanced funding was inadequate and reiterated the need for the full \$2.6 million. I am hoping that request is going to be looked at.

I could get into the study that was done, the verification of the case that was made by St Peter's, but I will not; instead—I do not often use editorials out of the *Hamilton Spectator*—I am going to use an article out of the *Hamilton Spectator*, an editorial of May 6. It says:

"At St Peter's, the wrong decision." I think we have made too many wrong decisions in our direction in this province in the past while, but the editorial in the *Hamilton Spectator* of 6 May says it very effectively.

"By shortchanging Hamilton's St Peter's Hospital, the province missed an opportunity to better achieve its goal of providing more care for the elderly in their homes and communities as opposed to institutions.

"St Peter's, one of the most innovative geriatric care facilities in Ontario, deserves more than it was given by the Health ministry. Only \$1.01 million of a \$2.6-million request for additional staff and supplies at St Peter's was approved.

"The hospital was denied its full request even though the ministry's own consultants acknowledged a year ago that more staff was needed to enable St Peter's to provide the same level of service provided for chronic care patients in other parts of Ontario.

"Health Minister Elinor Caplan recognizes the value of St Peter's, but indicates the province can't do more, given available resources. This comes from a government that evidently has the resources to launch a highly questionable expansion of kindergarten, for which there hasn't been great demand.

"St Peter's is a far cry from the traditional image of a chronic care hospital. It is not a virtual warehouse of beds where older patients with

varying health problems slowly deteriorate, with little hope of regaining some activities of daily living and a measure of independence.

"St Peter's has developed an array of high-calibre therapeutic programs and services which help patients regain lost capabilities. A typical success is a woman who was admitted after suffering a stroke at age 70.

"The patient had lost the power of speech and movement, but made a remarkable recovery after a year of intensive therapy in the hospital's reactivation program. At 71, she was able to go home again.

"Case histories like these illustrate the importance of St Peter's to this community. The hospital needs 40 additional staff members to ensure that adequate time and attention can be spent on each patient, to help them to return to the community earlier, and to reduce waiting lists at a time of growing demand.

"St Peter's officials point out their hospital has always balanced its budget, whereas other hospitals have chalked up deficits and been bailed out by the province. Understandably, they feel as if they are being penalized.

"Surely, it's as important for the ministry to provide financial incentives to hospitals which keep their houses in order, as it is to come to the rescue of those which have overspent. Trying to save dollars at the expense of St Peter's is not only unfair but shortsighted, given the ageing of the population.

"The ministry contradicted itself by rejecting more than half the funding St Peter's needs to better deliver the quality of care which the government ostensibly believes in. Its tight-fisted answer should not be accepted as final."

I would like to underline that. They have kept within their budget. They are getting less than comparable hospitals right across Ontario. They made their case, and the ministry's own investigators who were sent in made the case effectively, that the figures and what they were saying were accurate and that they had lived within their budget and not built up deficits from which there was a request to bail them out. For this, they are being penalized. Is that the message that is clearly going out in Ontario to a very respected institution like St Peter's? I have to tell members that is the message that is being taken in the city of Hamilton.

Let me deal with one or two other areas. I was going to go into the problems at Chedoke-McMaster Hospitals and the cutbacks that are required in another area dealing with rehabilitation and the needs of people. I will not because

one of my colleagues in this House, the member for Burlington South (Mr Jackson), I believe, asked some specific questions on the extent of the cutback and just what it was going to do in terms of the needs of people in our community.

What the kinds of cutbacks there—the kind of drop in the number of people who will be treated—for certain services are going to do mean larger costs down the road and more institutionalization. We are simply not addressing that problem.

But the problems cover a lot of other areas as well. A piece out of the 3 May copy of the *Hamilton Spectator* states: "Funding to Prevent Wife Abuse Criticized. Women's shelter group says \$5.4 million just a token. Battered women's shelters have attacked the Ontario government's \$5.4-million increase in funding for wife assault prevention programs as a token gesture." It goes on. I will not go into all the details in this particular story. Most members, I suspect, have had similar experiences in their own communities.

I do know that I have assisted the board of one institution in our town. I have worked with some of the others such as the interval houses, and I can tell members that they are not happy. They are not meeting the need. They are not beginning to meet the need. They are not breaking the backlog in an area where we are saying all of a sudden, "Hey, this is one of our priority areas and this kind of mistreatment and abuse of women must end." We are not going ahead. We are not increasing the budgets to the percentages at all. As the publicity is out, there is more awareness now of the needs and of what can be done, but once again this government does not seem to be moving in the direction of assisting in that area.

It strikes me that all of these also add up as a small part, although many of them are separate, in the first phase of the Thomson report. If, as I fear, we also are not going to see the complete action of the Thomson report, one has to ask the question of just exactly what has happened to our priorities.

Has this government reached a pretty firm decision that we are not our brother's keeper? It is an old saw. Maybe it is an old saw that was more used in socialist circles than some others, but one of the things that has kept me going as long as I have been in the political field is that I may not do the right thing at all times, but I have a firm belief that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, that this all-right-Jack society we are part of today is not a good direction to be heading in and that we

are not meeting the challenge of being our brothers' and sisters' keepers in this society.

I do not think that is just a saying and that it is trite, small or something that somebody will wear a halo trying to say. I think it is an obligation of all elected members in Ontario. I have to tell members I do not see that happening.

I wonder sometimes just whom the government is listening to. I am not going to give it much attention, but I could not help but get a little chuckle—it was the only thing that was worth doing—out of a recent memo the National Citizens' Coalition sent around. Some members probably have read it. It attacks funding and says this is the reason for all our troubles in this country, for feminist groups, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women which they say is a left-wing think tank or whose political agenda is indistinguishable from the New Democratic Party according to Mr Somerville's comments.

The Ministry of Labour, for example, has supposedly given \$10 million to the Canadian Labour Congress to train union organizers. My understanding is it is for the training of safety and health people in programs, but I guess you can play fast and loose with the facts in a document like this. The NCC says a disarmament fund has given millions of our tax dollars to groups which work to render Canada defenceless. It goes on to talk about the "deep-sixing of the Nielsen task force recommendations for government spending cuts in 1985. Remember the shelving of the Forget commission, reform proposals for unemployment insurance?" They wanted it cut long before we saw this current cut. They talk about a number of other services to people, which they call left-wing pressure groups, always appearing in the newspapers and on talk shows; they ask us to consider our taxes and tell these groups that the tax trough is not the way to go.

1540

The interesting thing is that every single one of them is a group that has something to do or something to say about the needs of ordinary people, the various programs such as wife abuse, some of the programs I have been talking about.

Are these the people, is it Mr Somerville and the National Citizens' Coalition, that this government is listening to? I hope not.

In terms of most members, I do not think that is who they are listening to, but certainly if you read their ideas and their diatribe, and it is a rather sick diatribe against the needs of ordinary people, you would have to wonder, because some of what they are saying in terms of the restraint and the

cutbacks we are seeing today is showing itself in the throne speech. I just hope to heaven it does not show itself in the budget as well.

I think also that we have seen little in the way of improvements for working people in this province or for improving working people's standards. I know that is not popular with a number of members in this House, but I think it is further evidence of the direction we should be going and of a civilized society.

I think it is worth mentioning some of the bills we have moved in this House, and from time to time others have moved in committee or at one level or another have been discussed, none of which has seen the light of day. The Pension Benefits Act to prevent employers from removing funds from a pension plan: that particular bill was almost prophetic. It was Bill 30, I think, the last time I moved it in this House.

Certainly, while the defenders will say, "Oh, it is not the definitive answer yet," the Ontario Hydro pension rulings of the court clearly suggest that the fight we have been carrying on for a good many years in Ontario, that pension funds and surpluses building up in pension funds are in lieu of wages and belong to the workers involved and should be used to enhance, improve or index their pension plans, and that companies being able to remove excess amounts from these pension plans was, as far as we were concerned, as we have stated in this House, little more than theft—it seems to me that court ruling has gone a long way to say, "Hey, you folks were right." When are we going to stop?

We froze for a while the companies' taking out excess, over and above what was needed to cover the actual terms of the pension. We froze the ability of the companies to take the money out, to add it, if you like, into the corporate treasury or the general revenue of the corporation. What we did not stop—I ask members of this House how it is any different—was the right of the same company, where it could not go in and pick up \$20 million that was surplus in that fund, to decide that for the next year, two years or three years, it was not going to make the payments, usually by contract, into the fund. All of a sudden, it is okay; you cannot directly lift it or steal it any more, but you can sure as heck get it by the back door simply by not making your contributions for a period of time.

Of course, that is what had been happening at Hydro and we now have the court ruling on it. I think that is going to lead to litigation and challenges right across Ontario, but I am saying to members of this House that I do not know how

there could have been a more effective case made for our argument that surpluses in those pension funds belong to the workers and should be used, one way or another, for enhancing their pension plans. I think that case is absolute.

I think one of the promises made by this government during the accord period, one of four it did not carry out, although it established a committee to look at it, was the indexing of private pensions. We are no nearer to it today. What we do see is indexing in the future and indexing at a percentage even less than some of the recommendations made by some of the committees. Once again, it clearly does not give us any confidence that this government is moving in a direction that is really going to benefit ordinary workers in the province.

There are a number of other bills I would commend to the House again, such as the one to amend the Employment Standards Act to provide a public audit board to require plant closure justification. I know that is too much interference with business for the Tories. They have never bought it. There was at least discussion of that with the Liberals. That also was another of the four of the 22 accord items, with the signature of the Premier on it, to be looked at, on which we have not, as far as I know, seen a single, solitary move since 1985. What is it now, 1989? That is four years.

What good was that promise worth in the accord? It was clearly there: justification, improvement, severance, the works in terms of plant closures. We have seen no move on it whatsoever. I would predict now, much as I hate to, that we will not see any move on it by this particular government. I think that is a sellout of the hopes people had. I think it is a clear indication that the company rules: "We cannot require justification. Somehow or other we might see a loss of investment or additional jobs in this province."

Create the Disabled Persons Employment Act: It was a percentage basis, true. It was not, I say to many of my colleagues on both sides of the House, because I was enamoured of percentages. But the figures have not changed. Back in 1976, I think, which was the first year I asked questions about the percentage of disabled and handicapped people who were working, it was something like 15 per cent; 85 per cent were not working. The figures just last year were almost identical.

Year after year as we would ask this question in the Labour estimates, we would find that the figures were not changing. It was not because a

quota system was the answer, although a lot of countries have it. But I have been asking that question in the Labour estimates for 10 or 11 years without a percentage, real improvement in the situation. I think it says that we have to look at something else.

Maybe it should be, subject to additional taxes, that if you have any kind of exemption because of the nature of your business, companies should be required to employ one, two or three per cent of the disabled and handicapped people across Ontario. It is much better for their peace of mind, for their mental health, for the status of our community and for the way we look at and treat people if these people are working. It is where they are able to work that I am talking about now, or do something, rather than not being able to work.

It is surprising how wide that net is. It is surprising the number of people with minor cases such as petit mal epilepsy who can make 30, 40 and 50 job searches. I had one young chap who had done something like 160 job searches and did not get hired because of an epileptic condition. In his case, it was not even a serious one, but the minute it was reported, that was the end of his chances. I am simply saying that particular young man would have been an excellent employee, in my opinion. We sure tried. We got a number of interim jobs, but almost always at the very lowest end of the pay scale. It seems to me that we have not come to grips with the needs and hopes of disabled people in our society.

Amend the Education Act to allow local boards to provide medical and insurance benefits to retired employees: The recent changes did not cover this specific request from some of the education union people.

Amend the Employment Standards Act to provide a leave of absence clause for employees elected to political office: It does not apply across the board on a provincial basis and it should.

Amend the Public Commercial Vehicles Act to improve safety by clearing the area in front of the white line on buses and streetcars: I have been arguing that case. It was argued very strongly by the transit drivers here in Toronto who can attribute at least a couple of deaths and several injuries to the fact that trolleys and buses had to pull away from the curb. They could not see because people were crowded right up to the door, whereas in most cities in Ontario, you are required to step back of the white line opposite the driver's seat in the vehicle.

When this government was first elected as a minority, I went to the Minister of Transportation

(Mr Fulton), told him of my concern, showed him a copy of the bill I had already moved for a number of years and suggested he meet with the transit union people. He did; it took some time, but right after that he also met with the Toronto Transit Commission. The transit union people thought that maybe they had made the case and that the pushing we had done for years was going to get us somewhere. But the Minister of Transportation had only one meeting with the transit commission and my, how his attitude changed.

If he were here, I suspect he would admit—I presume he is an honourable man—what he told me when I first brought the bill to him: "It is a health and safety matter. That does make sense. I'm interested. We'll see what we can do." I could raise it with him now and I would get a laugh; it is dead. This is three or four years after. Why is it dead? It is dead because the transit commission says, "Oh, well, if you force us to do that, even though it is in place in a number of other cities in the province of Ontario, we're going to have to put so many more vehicles on in the immediate rush hour and there's so much more cost."

Cost obviously carried the day, in the arguments of the transit commission. It sure as blazes was not the arguments of safety or of the transit drivers or, indirectly, I would suggest, of the public in the city of Toronto when that bill went down the drain.

1550

Create political rights for public servants; amend the Labour Relations Act to include security guards in the same bargaining unit as the employees in the plant they are in; amend the Labour Relations Act to deal with attempts to replace union or progressive union employees with nonunion employees—part of the contracting out battle we have in so many establishments—who are mostly women, mostly immigrant, mostly new citizens, whether it is cleaning or food services operations; amend the Labour Relations Act to provide coverage for agricultural employees in an industrial or factory setting, and I want to deal with that one in a little more detail in just a moment; amend the Labour Relations Act to prevent the hiring of strike-breakers; amend the Employment Standards Act to provide three additional public holidays; amend the Employment Standards Act to provide additional vacation time based on length of service.

Incidentally, those are not wild, pie-in-the-sky suggestions. Ontario is not leading the field in

statutory holidays today. You would think our province probably should be one of the leaders in stat holidays, but it is not. It is also not leading the field in terms of paid vacation. I guess we have used it so often that nobody listens any more, but after a year's service you are now entitled to six weeks' vacation with pay in Sweden. Very few union contracts have to include vacation in them any more. We have two here, and it is not total, and we have not moved. There are provinces that have three weeks. We do not do very well compared to most of western Europe in this province of ours, but we sure have not moved in an awful lot of years in terms of updating our statutory holidays and vacations with pay act.

Employment Standards Act amendments to protect workers in contracting out and amend the Employment Standards Act to reduce the work-week here in Ontario.

There are a number of others I could mention, but I am going to deal with one only—once again, it has been a long while since we last dealt with it—and that is, amend the Labour Relations Act to provide coverage for agricultural employees in an industrial or factory setting.

I went back to the bill, which has been re-moved year after year and which we will do again this year. Bill 39 was the last time we moved it. Let me read the members a description of the bill and then the shortcomings of our present system.

"The purpose of the bill is to clarify that the Labour Relations Act applies to employees who are engaged in agricultural employment in an industrial or factory setting." That was done purposely to try to remove some of the fears that we were constantly getting from our farm community and our farmers.

"Clause 2(b) of the act currently states that the act does not apply 'to a person employed in agriculture.' This provision has been interpreted broadly by the Ontario Labour Relations Board to exclude from the act persons whose employment relates to agriculture but who are employed in organizations that resemble industrial plants."

How did that particular bill of mine come about? It came about as a result of some 100-odd workers in Picton, I think it was, organizing in a mushroom farm or factory—take your choice. There was a Campbell Soup plant across the road from them that was organized. These workers signed up; over 70 per cent attempted to get certification and were denied it because they were agricultural workers as it is classed in the Labour Relations Act.

When we brought the case before this House 10 or 11 years ago, what were we able to tell the members? We were able to tell them that (1) the 100-odd employees worked three eight-hour shifts—it was an around-the-clock operation, (2) they punched in—a factory clock setting—and punched out and (3) they worked on a moving assembly line production. It was as close to a factory setting as you could get and not one of them actually had anything to do with farming, but they were denied their rights because they were classed as agricultural employees.

It seems to me that was stretching it, and we have not seen this government—even though we have re-moved that every year or the Minister of Labour has taken a look at whether or not it has not taken it too far.

Why have I raised it again? Why have I singled it out? There are more important private bills there in the lot that I have raised with you. Well, I guess it is because of a case that my colleague the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr D. S. Cooke) raised in the House the other day, and that is the unfortunate death, once again on a corporate mushroom farm, Highline Produce, near Windsor, just a short period of time ago.

Letters on this have gone to the Solicitor General (Mrs Smith) and to the Minister of Labour (Mr Sorbara). There are a number up here; I am just trying to pick out the one which best states the case, and I may not have the very best one. This is to the Minister of Labour.

"Dear Mr Minister:

"On March 1, I wrote requesting that you seriously consider extending the health and safety legislation afforded most workers in Ontario to farm workers in light of the recent accident in my region that took the life of Ms Chou Ngoy Kim.

"There now appears to be a very good chance that Chou Ngoy Kim's accident will never be given the thorough public review that it clearly deserves. Coroner Dr Maurice Bull has decided against an inquest into this death. And since your ministry cannot investigate the unsafe conditions which led to Kim's death, it will not be investigated to ensure this kind of accident does not happen again.

"Recent reports in the Windsor Star about workers' fears for their safety at the mushroom operation clearly indicate the need for investigation and action. As Minister of Labour, I believe you would want to ensure that an unsafe work environment, regardless as to whether it is covered by legislation or not, is made safe for workers.

"To this end I am calling on you to prevail upon the Solicitor General to ensure a coroner's inquest is held into the death of Chou Ngoy Kim.

"Of course, the real answer to helping to ensure safety in the agricultural workplace is by extending Ontario's health and safety legislation. However, I trust you will agree that the death at Highline mushroom farm deserves to be investigated by a coroner so recommendations can be made to improve the safety at this plant."

Those workers are not covered under the industrial health and safety deal, just as they are not covered under the Labour Relations Act. Can any member in this House sitting here honestly justify that and not only the fact that will there be no inquest as we understand it but also the fact that they have no coverage, and that the Ministry of Labour, because they are not covered, cannot enter into the case? I do not how one would justify it. One would have to use some twisted logic, as far as I am concerned, to justify that lack of basic coverage.

I was particularly disappointed in the throne speech as well because it simply did not give any clear direction in terms of the housing problem that exists in the province. There are so many issues in terms of housing that I could raise, but suffice for the moment to go with one. It is a letter I wrote back in March to the Minister of Housing (Ms Hošek). It concerns the tenants at 2520 Barton Street East and 45 Barlake Avenue in Hamilton.

"These 200 tenant families have had to suffer through seven delays over the past two years in order to recover the illegal rents charged since 1985 by their landlord, 457012 Ontario Ltd. Some tenants are owed up to \$1,900, but still another appeal hearing set for March 30, 1989, has been given to this landlord, who has constantly avoided submitting the necessary documents for a decision to be made.

"There have now been two official rulings to grant the tenants their deserved rebates, but another appeal is still being allowed. Dr Ratna Ray, chair of the Rent Review Hearings Board, has described this situation as 'No more than a farce.'

"Does the minister agree with her own chairperson that the situation, where the landlord is able to avoid paying back illegal rent increases for two years by endlessly delaying the appeal system, shows that this rent review system is no more than a farce? Will the minister take action to end this abuse of the appeal hearings system so that the tenants of 2520 Barton Street East and 45

Barlake Avenue in Hamilton can immediately get the rent rebates that are owed to them?"

Over a number of years, there have been rulings that they have to be paid. On one occasion the chairman of the board, the same Dr Ratna Ray, said that the landlord should either come in at the next hearing with all of the documents or that was it. The landlord's lawyer came back in at the next hearing, the third or fourth hearing, without any of the documents and they were granted yet a further extension.

I guess what I am saying to the minister is, forgive us for saying in this House again and again that something stinks in terms of the Ministry of Housing and the rent review process.

Another letter I got from a lady in my constituency, dated 4 May, asks questions that are difficult to answer. It is a short letter and she writes to me as follows:

"Dear Mr Mackenzie:

"I purchased a condominium at the above address. I have paid a \$20,000 deposit. I have also been paying \$850 rent from 6 January. I was told I would pay two months' rent as the building would be registered 1 March. I was told this by Effort Trust Real Estate. I am due to pay another month's rent 6 May. That will be five months now.

"As far as I know, there have been people living in the building since November and the building still has not been registered. My lawyer called the lawyer for the building and was told it is in the hands of Queen's Park. My lawyer has told me to hold back the 6 May rent. I have the money in the bank to pay off the balance of the condominium, but if it goes on like this for much longer, I won't have it.

"We are paying all this money and they don't even have a superintendent in the building. I would appreciate it, sir, if you could help me in this matter by finding out what is really going on.

"Yours truly," and she has signed her name to it.

1600

Quite frankly, even from the answers to the questions, and we have asked some pretty specific ones in this House, I do not know what is going on. I do not think any of us do. If the Liberal members do, then maybe out of decency they should tell us. I do not think the minister knows what is going on either in terms of the housing problem here in Ontario.

Let me deal with another one that really does upset me. We raised it in the House just the other day. I am now entering into the field of health and safety and talking about the Dome Mines

accident. This is a little better than a year ago now, but we are still waiting for the inquest that will be held. I think this is one of the most devastating indictments of the Ministry of Labour that I have seen in the 13 1/2 or 14 years I have been in this House.

I am going to read into the record—it is three and a quarter pages—a letter to “Mr P. Kovisto, PEng, Director, Mining Health and Safety Branch, Ministry of Labour, 144 Pine Street, Third Floor, Sudbury, Ontario.”

The letter is from Norm Carriere, who happens to be the co-ordinator, occupational health and safety, senior staff person, United Steelworkers of America, operating out of the office here in Toronto; an ex-employee, I might say, of the Sudbury region.

This, to me at least, is a real indictment of this ministry and of our approach to health and safety in Ontario. Members opposite may not agree with me—I know partisanship plays a role in this House—but I think they are going to have difficulty in answering the questions asked and the issues raised in this letter. What does it say?

“Re Dome Mines Ltd fatal accident 20 February 1989.

“I have reviewed the written report from our health and safety representative who investigated the accident which resulted in the death of three of our members. It is hard to believe that after all the attention given to safety in Ontario mines in the last 15 years, starting with the Ham commission, that such an accident was allowed to happen.

“It is a well-known fact that a large percentage of mining fatalities are attributed to fall of ground. The Burkett inquiry in 1980 confirmed that fall of ground was a major cause of fatalities and lost-time accidents in the mining industry. In 1984, following a major rockburst at a Falconbridge mine, where four miners were killed, the government appointed the provincial committee of inquiry into ground control and emergency preparedness in Ontario mines. The committee found that in the 20-year period ending in 1984, there were 82 deaths attributable to falls of ground, which represented about one third of all underground fatalities. Surely we have learned enough about the damages of poor ground condition and loose in a mine to know that mining areas where bad ground exists or where ground movement occurs are always potential hazards.

“Special attention must be given to such areas to make sure that the mining is always done according to the plans that every precaution

possible is taken to protect workers from exposure to loose and that the regulations are complied with. The accident occurred in the same stope where a miner was killed in 1981 from falling ground while he was scaling.

“On 20 October 1981, after the fatality, the company submitted a mining plan for the purpose of continuing to mine this dangerous area referred to as 1081 number 6 stope. In the plan, under the heading of ground control, the company submitted that eight-foot rock bolts would be used rather than six-foot bolts. This plan was submitted to the mining health and safety branch in Timmins. My guess is that the plan was prepared by a professional engineer and that the reasons for the use of eight-foot bolts and 1081 number 6 stope were because of the unusually bad ground conditions in that stope.

“The 1081 number 6 work area had an access raise which workers used to enter the stope and could travel from the access raise to a mill hole and manway which were in an easterly direction. The crew”—this, I think, is where, to me, and I know the union’s position, it is simply nothing short of criminal—“had shown concerns about the ground conditions in this stope on February 17 and had requested the advice of rock mechanics. When the shift boss and the company rock mechanic visited the stope, they concluded that there was a slip in the back, located in the travelway between the access raise and the mill hole and manway. The shift boss referred to this as a wedge. They also found that the back where the slip was located was drumming,” which is just a condition for unsafe rock, “which can only indicate that it was loose and potentially hazardous.

“The rock mechanic concluded that it was potentially hazardous, that two members of the crew were aware of the potential danger of this wedge falling. The rock mechanic also stated that he and the shift boss”—listen to this—“walked under this area at least a couple of times.”

They did not say anything to the crew that was there while they were doing it, but the message that was clearly taken by the workers was that if the rock mechanic and the shift boss can walk under this loose area, it cannot be that bad.

“The crew had only used six-foot bolts in this area and there were no eight-foot bolts in the stope or on the level. The rock mechanic suggested eight-foot bolts to make sure they would go through the loose and anchor in solid ground.

“When the shift boss and rock mechanic were inspecting the loose, only two crew members

were in the stope. Two other workers had gone down to work on the mill hole, which was hung up. The only orders they gave the crew were that they were to bolt from the access raise side of the stope and use eight-foot roof bolts and six-foot split bolts, that they should use posts when roof-bolting."

Then there is reference to the sections of the regulations that I read into the record. These are the direct regulations as a result of the 1980, 1981 and 1984 meetings that clearly decided anew that loose was the chief killer in mines and what had to be done.

"Subsection 63(2) of the regulation states, 'Where a ground condition indicates that a rockburst or uncontrollable fall of ground may occur, the condition shall be recorded in writing by the supervisor on the work shift and signed by him, and the record shall describe the state of corrective measures taken.'

"The shift boss recorded scaling raise and bolting posts, secure back. Nothing to indicate that a fall of ground may occur. The only corrective action taken from his report was to secure back, and no orders or measures to ensure that no one walks under the unsafe ground until the securing of the back was complete.

"Even more important, section 65 of the regulations clearly states that 'Where there is a danger or hazard to a worker, the same shall be

(a) closed by barricades, fencing or other suitable means; and

(b) warning signs shall be posted.'

"Any competent supervisor or rock mechanic would know that travelling under this location was hazardous and should have ordered the area closed until it was made safe. Had section 65 of the regulations been complied with, the crew would have been ordered to work from good ground, which was on the access raised side of the stope. Barricades would have been installed with signs across the travelway on the mill hole side of the stope and clear instructions should have been given to the two crew member workers on the mill hole not to use the travelway under the loose until it was secured."

Had this been followed, we would not have had three miners killed on 20 February 1989; I remind members this was three days after they had raised this dangerous condition with the supervisor and rock mechanic. Incidentally, the ministry people were subsequently informed as well.

"What I conclude"—and I am reading Mr Carriere's letter now—"from reading the initial report on this fatality is that both the supervisor

and rock mechanic gambled that the loose would not fall and elected to put production ahead of safety. Clearly, by closing the travelway to the mill hole, they would have made it impossible for the crew to continue mucking in the event that the mill hole was cleared until after the loose back was secured.

"The clear message both the work mechanic and the shift boss was giving to the workers by continuing to walk under the loose area was that although they should take precautionary measures, bolting the loose,"—the eight-foot instead of six-foot bolts—"travelling under the loose was not a concern.

"I am aware that an inquest will be held in this case and that all relevant facts relating to this accident will be brought out. I do believe, however, that there was sufficient information available from the initial investigation to show that there was clearly violation of the regulations in this case and that action should have been taken immediately to ensure that a similar accident will not be allowed to happen again.

"Could you therefore advise me what action you have taken to date against this company by way of orders and/or prosecutions, and why your inspectors have allowed this stope to be mined without the eight-foot bolts as required in the company's mining plan?

"Awaiting your reply...."

I could read members—it is one of the strongest letters I have ever sent in this House—the letter I sent to the minister. I will not, but I simply want to point out that those three workers are dead because the clear regulations, totally unenforced three days before that mine fall, killed those three workers in the Dome mine in Timmins. There is no question in any of the miners' or the union's position on that or in the evidence that has so far come out from their investigation.

Maybe the inquest will say: "It was wrong. They were not even bolting with the eight-foot bolts up until the day they raised the complaint." That may happen. I am simply saying to this House that is simply not good enough. We are having too many of these.

I am trying to restrain myself today, but when we asked questions of the minister on this, he danced around whether or not he was aware that those two regulations had not been met in this particular case. But then in a statement the very next day, obviously in response to the question we asked in this House and the pressure that I know was coming from the workers in the Dome mine in Timmins, he said they now had a team which was putting together—what were his exact

words? I do not have his release in front of me—the kind of regulations that were necessary to make sure this did not happen.

1610

That is a pile of baloney. Even if he is doing it, the regulations are there as a result of deaths in 1980, 1981 and 1984. They say very clearly that when you have drummy and loose rock, you fence it off and you work from the opposite side of the stope, if that is possible, and that you do not work until either the bolting or even scaling and bolting have been done.

Regulations 63(2) and 65 are as clear as a bell and they were not enforced by this government and this ministry. Let me tell members that in a number of the other deaths over just the last two or three months in the mines, it is loose again and, as I understand it at the moment, in four others that are being investigated, in three of which loose was the concern, they already know things that were not done that should have been done.

I am simply saying to this House that as far as I am concerned, yes, on the safety and health stuff I can get angry and this government is not living up to any real commitment in terms of making sure that workers do not have to die like the Dome miners did in Sudbury.

The Ontario Public Service Employees Union has a number of cases that really make one wonder. I will not get into details on them. I want to raise another old one in which I simply cannot understand what is happening. I should have brought in the tragic deaths of two Canadian paper workers just two or three weeks ago in northern Ontario as well. The deaths were not from rockfalls, but there were some serious questions in the deaths of those two workers as well. Incidentally, as most members probably know, we are up to 94 deaths so far this year in industrial accidents in Ontario.

I have a letter that was sent to me—and I will not go into all of the details on it—once again by Norm Carriere. It is a short letter. I will read it, but when I say that we seem to take so long getting through some thick skulls somewhere in this province—it is an inquest into the fatality of Mr Marcelin at a plant in Hawkesbury:

"I received a copy of your letter to Mr Martin Denis, United Steelworkers of America representative, advising him that an inquest will be held into this fatality.

"The United Steelworkers of America are the bargaining agent for all employees in the workplace where the accident occurred and has requested standing at the inquest. I am surprised

that you are not prepared to grant standing without first hearing arguments in court prior to the inquest. Your position on this matter reminds me of the 1950s and 1960s when inquests into workplace fatalities were designed to make companies' safety programs look good and always put the blame on the worker for violating company safety rules. The only people who gave evidence were company officials and company-owned police departments.

"I really thought that those days were over and that coroners today were more interested in hearing the interested parties to ensure that all relevant facts are known and that, hopefully, recommendations are made to prevent similar fatal accidents from reoccurring.

"For your information, I enclose a memorandum dated December 10, 1984, from the chief coroner, Dr Ross C. Bennett, to all coroners on this very issue. It advises that the union representing the workers should be granted standing as a general rule. Could you, therefore, advise Mr Martin Denis and myself as soon as possible why you want arguments as to why we should get standing in the case of Mr Marcelin's fatality?"

He has here the letter—and it is very firm; take my word for it. I will show it to anyone; I will not try to read it. It is a fairly long letter from the coroner, Dr Bennett, that the union representing the workers in the case of an industrial death is to be given standing. It is automatic in northern Ontario now. They had to fight for it. In Sudbury, the union is automatically notified and automatically has standing at the inquest into the death of a miner.

Here we have Hawkesbury—are there different rules for eastern Ontario?—where the coroner involved says: "Hey. You can't be here to represent the worker that you legally have to represent as the union that has certified the bargaining for him. Before we are going to give you standing into what happened in his death, we say you have to go to court and make the arguments to see if you can convince us that you have standing." A direct violation, I might say, of the orders—I am not sure what authority he has—given by the chief coroner of Ontario, Dr Bennett.

I am simply saying once again: What in blazes is it that the union has to go after the minister, and they have been after him on this one, to rectify a situation that, once again, was supposed to have been rectified in 1984? Maybe if we had it automatically—we cannot say that it would cut down some of the deaths, but there is experience

on the part of the inquest committees that the union has that represent workers in fatalities, and questions that can be asked that will not come out otherwise, from a number of inquests that I am aware of, and that certainly expose unsafe and hazardous conditions in the workplace.

I guess it just follows up the terrible letter from the Dome mining deaths. It is a lesser problem maybe. This one is just an inquest into some worker who has already been killed, but his representatives, who know what they are doing in this, cannot be entitled, even though the order was given out by the chief coroner in 1984 that they were to automatically have standing.

What is so difficult about resolving a problem like that and why should it take a bunch of letters to the minister? Why should it not be done with a simple phone call and the record set straight and another copy of Dr. Bennett's instructions sent out to all coroners in Ontario?

Under the safety and health heading, I was going to but I will not spend some time on, I think, a very good letter to the Minister of Health that has been sent out by Dr Mary Wynne Ashford, president of the Canadian Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. It has to do with the sale of tritium by Ontario Hydro and it has been sent to all members of cabinet and the government of Ontario. I found it extremely useful.

She makes the case that there is more than just a minor health and safety question involved here, let alone the abhorrence I at least have of the potential sale of tritium to any power on the face of this earth. I hope that the issue is taken to heart by members of the government and the cabinet and that they do deal with it.

I guess the other question I have is, where is Bill 208? What is going on with Bill 208? If anybody is taking a major step forward, and I guess a major risk, it is the labour movement, because it becomes part of a bipartite body that will be responsible not only for the training of safety and health workers on both sides, together with the management and company side, but also for programs that are put in place, the kind of training that is needed and for making some hard decisions, but making them only with the certified health and safety representative. They have indicated they are willing to take this gamble. It means they have got to put their money and their position where their mouths are. They have got to say: "Hey, we accept one of the few times that there clearly is a responsibility on us as well as on the companies."

Yet because of an overwhelming reaction, mostly from smaller businesses, and I have probably received more letters on this than any other such issue—I guess I expect it from the Somervilles and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and some of them, but I am a little surprised by some of the other companies—we see this tremendous lobby going on with the Premier. We see him making comments, which the Minister of Labour now tells us were not accurate, saying that they might not be able to proceed with this particular piece of legislation.

I want to tell the government members that this is a challenge to the companies, to the unions, to the whole province of Ontario and is a vital next step in ensuring a much safer and healthier workplace and taking responsibility for that workplace. If this government decides to back off on that, its credibility, which has suffered a bit in the last short while in any event, will really be skewered.

I hope that that is not the position of this government, but once again, I looked in the throne speech for a word on the health and safety issues, for a word on Bill 208 which the minister himself—I do not have his comments in front of me, but when he introduced it in this House, he said that it was one of the most important and fundamental steps that had to be taken. There is sure no assurance when reading that throne speech that we are on the road to seeing Bill 208 brought into this House.

I think I would be remiss if I did not mention a few of the long-standing strikes and the unfortunate one, the Dow Chemical strike in Sarnia which is now darned near a year old, where there has been a direct attempt, I think, to intimidate. I understand he has just been moved out. That may be one of the first hopes. Shortly before this strike started, an American manager was brought in who had quite a history of breaking strikes in American plants in the United States. He was sent in for that one purpose only.

That is a strike situation which has been a tough one and where the union has worked overtime to keep control of the picket lines in spite of deliberate provocations. Once again, I raised them in this House: trucks that came in and out again and did not even load and cameras on construction booms that were brought in alongside the gates and moved up as soon as these trucks went in or out and started filming all the workers on the picket line; obvious direct intimidation or efforts to provoke something happening on that picket line. They made sure it did not happen, but as I say, our best efforts have

not been able to break that deadlock and it is almost a year old.

Another tragic strike is that of the Canadian Medical Laboratories workers in my own town and in the town of Simcoe. There is no question in my mind that Starr and Dr Mull set out to make sure they broke that union. I do not know whether they will succeed or not. There are a lot of guts there, but they have been out about eight months now. They are decent, well-trained people, highly qualified, and I think it is a shame to find labour relations in Ontario allowing what is going on there to continue.

1620

We have the situation in a recent strike—the only reason I raise this one is because it is so similar to so many public sector strikes: I am talking now about the strike that has just started in the past few weeks, the children's aid society workers in my town.

We have the children's aid society out right now, not the Catholic branch, the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton-Wentworth. What is the situation? The situation is, once again, the silent partner at the bargaining table, because most of the funding is from the province. Yet the province says it has no responsibility and: "You have to settle it. It's a collective bargaining, face-to-face situation."

Once again, the social workers involved in this strike and the foster care placement workers involved in this strike are serious, sincere and pretty decent people. They are more than a little frustrated by the fact that the ministry cannot seem to see the benefits of the kind of work they do, as against institutionalization, which is one of the things that will happen if they are not doing the work they are doing with the children's aid society.

They are concerned about one other item. I have not normally been critical of the board and I am not launching into an attack on them now. I think the government is as responsible as the board in this case. But I want to make it clear that it is difficult for the workers, who are experienced and trained—there are very few with short service in this situation—to be told they cannot get a work plan that gives some recognition to their years of experience and their seniority and some recognition of the kind of legal threats they face in the difficult job they are in, over a four- or five-year plan period. Yet just 10 or 11 days before the strike started, we saw some hefty raises, admittedly over a period of time, to the management people on that board.

The union claimed that some of the percentages for the jobs were as high as 18, 20 and 22 per cent. In fact, I do not think most of them got more than a 7.6 per cent increase, but I think a couple of the top officials were moved \$8,000 or \$9,000 in one move. What they did get was the assurance and the outline of their salary, the progression they would make—I am talking about the senior people now—over the next four or five years. The ministry had to have been aware of it. Whether they were party to it or not does not matter; it was done less than two weeks before the strike started.

What kind of a message do members think that sends out to the line social workers and child care workers? They are in a situation where they are now being told: "No, you can't have that. You can't have some of the other things you're asking for. Your request to know what the plan is, the progression is, over four or five years, or even the idea of some remuneration for the seniority and service you've put in, can't be considered." Yet they just did it with management on that board.

If the ministry was aware, then somebody was awfully careless in how he handled the setup to that particular strike situation. It concerns me those workers should be in that position. It concerns me that the workers at the Orenda Division of Hawker Siddeley Canada feel their strike here in Toronto is one that is designed to close down their particular plant. I hope they are not right. I have real concerns myself.

But certainly it is not really a question of money and certainly there is no movement and no attempt to move. Basically they were after, more than anything else, the question of some security and knowledge of what was going to be the future of their jobs in that particular case.

I want to leave the ongoing strike situations—we have had worse years, although some of these ones should disturb us all—and deal for a moment with Bill 162. I will not take a lot of time on this, because I am sure my colleague the member for Sudbury East (Miss Martel) will be dealing with this or has dealt with some of it.

But I do want to say that, having travelled part of the time around this province—I was not on the committee full-time—I still cannot understand why there was the hardline position on the part of this government that we would not hear all of the groups that wanted to be heard and almost half of those that asked to be heard, some major players. I think the most obvious probably were the large number of uranium workers at Elliot Lake. I do

not understand why these workers were not heard.

I know the argument is, "Oh, we get enough of a cross-section view by the ones that we've picked in the hearings"; hearings, incidentally, which the government did not want in the first place and which probably were more brought about not even by our questions, although we certainly were after them, but by a demonstration of injured workers in the lobby of this building.

I do not know why the position would be so tough on what, in my honest opinion, is the second worst bill I have seen in my 13 and a half years in this House; why the position would be so hardline in not allowing everybody to have a say, when it is going to affect literally hundreds of thousands of workers in this province.

We said very clearly—and, sure, we were needing this government a bit when we did it—that when the hearings were on in extra billing, it was the Liberals who stood up in committee and insisted that every single doctor who wanted to have a say would have a say. The Liberals insisted that every single doctor would have a say in that committee. Are doctors that much more important to the Liberal Party than the workers who are involved, injured workers? Maybe they do not have quite as much clout or quite as much money, but I will tell the Liberals I think they were wrong on that one.

I think they were wrong in the statements that have been made by the Minister of Labour in this province that he was going to proceed regardless, and his comments about the ne'er-do-wells and so on who were raising opposition to this particular bill. That will come back to haunt them, I will tell them right now. How much effect these things have for ever, I do not know, but it will haunt them right through until the next election.

Then there were the comments of Raj Anand, the Ontario human rights commissioner, who clearly indicated that this bill could and would be challenged in court. That has already been clearly indicated as a direction of some of the unions that appeared before the committee.

Bill 162 is, in my opinion, the lousiest bill next to the wage control bill we have seen, as far as I am concerned, in this particular Legislature.

My colleague today raised a very good case of deeming. It was the case that caused the member for Norfolk (Mr Miller) some agitation, and some words that should not have been said were said during the committee hearings.

When the young woman who was cited today raised her concerns over deeming in this legisla-

tion, what was the answer that came from one of the Liberal members sitting in on the committee? He said: "What are you raising this deeming issue for? Why are you complaining? That's what this bill does. It corrects it." Obviously, the Liberal member filling in for that one day on that committee had never read the bill and did not have the foggiest idea of what the bill said, because it does not do that. The bill does, as has been said, institutionalize deeming very clearly.

We have about eight of the most outstanding cases one would ever want where that is clearly the case, the decisions already, and we will be moving those in this House on a weekly basis as we did today, to clearly indicate that that is exactly what this bill does.

At a meeting with the Minister of Labour just last week, a number of the people who are responsible for Bill 162 and how it is handled and what we try to do to fight the bill met with the Minister of Labour. One of the things they raised with him was a case that had come before the committee in northwestern Ontario.

I was not at this meeting. This was a meeting between the minister and some of his staff, some of the Workers' Compensation Board people and four people, I believe, from the Ontario Federation of Labour. They said to him:

"We're going to show you how this bill doesn't work. Let us give you a recent real-life example of our concerns. Last year, one of our members, a 26-year-old woman, suffered a horrifying accident as she worked alone at night. Her leg was caught in an auger"—this was at a sawmill up in northwestern Ontario—"which shredded it as it ripped it away from the rest of her body. Somehow she managed to crawl off the platform and over 100 feet through the dirt and muck until she collapsed. Fortunately, she was discovered before she bled to death and she survived."

I know that I do not have to fuel the members' imaginations about the incredible trauma experienced by this woman and the effect it has had on her personal life. Suffice to say that it has been bad; very bad. But thank God this did happen to her before Bill 162. Under the existing act, we calculate that this young woman will receive permanent compensation.

Incidentally, I should say she has made a rather remarkable recovery and she is going to, I think, get her job back. The union went to work for her. The machine can be slightly modified. The artificial leg is now being fitted and she has healed. She showed an awful lot of gumption

once she survived. She will probably get back to a job at close to the same salary.

But her permanent compensation would be about \$20 per day for the loss of her leg. Every time she adjusts her artificial leg or tries to hide it, or withdraw from some otherwise normal life activity because of it, she will have at least the \$20 a day, indexed so that it does not lose its value, as her compensation. Is there anyone here who would exchange a leg for \$20 per day? How about \$100 per day? How much would be fair compensation for her leg?

1630

Under the current act, she gets \$400 or a couple of dollars over \$400 a month, and she gets that for life; that is the current act. What will she get under the new act? I want to tell members that it works out to \$2 a day. She will get a lump sum of \$16,000 and that will end at retirement.

How is this new bill going to help workers? Tell me whether that woman should not get it because she might be able to go back to work. For the rest of her life she will suffer with that artificial leg, and the \$400-a-month pension she would have had for the rest of her life will, at 28 years of age, be a one-time lump sum payment of \$16,000.

I do not know if any of the members can justify it; the minister could not. It is second hand—he might deny it—but I am told that at the meeting his question to his staff was: “Well, those figures can’t be right. That is not really the way it is, is it?” His staff had to verify that the case that was put to him was exactly right.

I am simply telling members that this bill is a cost-cutting measure and not one that is going to help workers. Whether it is rehabilitation or whether it is in terms of the pensions they get, the effect it will have on them will be for the rest of their lives. As I said, it is just simply a lousy, unfair bill taking away from workers. For God’s sake, I hope the members in this House will have second thoughts about Bill 162.

I have gone on a little longer than I intended to. I was going to go into some of the minister’s comments on Bill 162. I think they are a perversity of justice. I think they are uncalled for and indicate he is not listening. Why the heck were we going through the hearings? Was it because they were forced into them? There is nothing else, anyhow, if they were not going to mean anything. He clearly stated in some of his speeches that they were going to proceed regardless of the weight of evidence that was heard by the committee.

I think there are a number of other things that are worth saying. I am a little bit disturbed that we have not had any indication of direction. I was pleased to see the comments from the member for Wentworth East (Ms Collins) that maybe we were finally going ahead with the east-end clinic. That has been a long battle for a lot of people and that is welcome news.

I was really upset that we did not see any action or any direction in terms of environmental problems; not enough, in any event, other than the Cleantario lottery. I wonder what this government’s intention is in terms of the Lax property. Is the Ministry of the Environment going to provide any funding to help clean up that property or is that outside its jurisdiction?

On that waterfront development, I think that is a legitimate request and will have a lot to do with just how much people have an incentive to try to clean up the water in Hamilton harbour and that end of Lake Ontario. So far, the local people have not even been able to arrange a meeting with the minister to find out exactly what the bottom line is going to be on the cleanup of that property. I am sure there are people here who should be able to arrange it.

I think there are questions that could be asked about the importance of the reactor at McMaster University. I think it would be a crime—there was another excellent editorial in the *Hamilton Spectator* just last week—if that reactor were not continued for research purposes. Our party has taken a tough position, and I have no hesitation with that tough position in terms of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons. We have never said there is no real merit—not even on the Ottawa River and the small plant there, Rolphoton—it should be continued in terms of medical use or research, or research that may be of assistance to industry. I think the McMaster reactor is one of the most important research facilities we have in this province of ours and in this country. It would be a shame in my view if they were not able to continue and be relieved of the fear, almost from month to month, whether the funding will be there to continue that research.

I was going to deal with it at the end. I started at the beginning with Ontario Hydro and the pension issue. I hope that message is clearly looked at and listened to by members of this House.

I want to raise an issue, but I do not have all the details yet. I have a fax in front of me but I have not been able to take a real look at it. I am informed by some people in Hamilton and a young lawyer that they got a totally unexpected

letter from the Minister of Transportation, just in the last day, which simply said that he was seriously considering backing out of the 90 per cent funding that has been in place for 18 years now for electrical transportation, the trolley buses and what have you in our city. I know there was a meeting in Hamilton at 11 o'clock this morning and that there were an awful lot of angry people at that meeting. I know a submission was made in opposition to this government move.

I want to say that if the government is thinking of reneging on that commitment, it had better think very carefully because when the issue was raised back in 1985-86, I believe there was a close to unanimous vote against doing away with this in the city of Hamilton. The *quid pro quo* was that there would be updating and expenditures made on the overhead because they were in bad repair; the electrical system, the trolleys and so on that were used in our community.

I want to tell members that literally millions have been spent in the last three or four years on that upgrading. If all of a sudden they are now faced with the threat that the government may back out, after they have spent the money and done the upgrading of this system, I think the government is asking for a real uproar. I understand that was what was going on at the meeting this morning with the people in the city of Hamilton, who I do not think want to see, with all the problems there may be with it, the elimination of what is certainly an environmentally cleaner method of transit, as long as it still can be shown to be effective at all.

I think that is an issue we will probably be hearing about over the next couple of days in this House. I hope the government is not so insensitive, although unfortunately it has been on a number of other issues, to move so quickly. Certainly, I am told by my contacts in Hamilton today that the letter they got from the minister was a total surprise.

I want to conclude with what I opened with. The government may get a few things off its mind in the throne speech, but I do not think it is really a very important part of the deliberations of this House. It could be. I would be much happier if it were laid out as a real blueprint that the government meant as to what it was going to do and try to do, and not have it as superficial and lacking in some of the important issues as this particular throne speech is.

But I recognize the budget is the real indicator of where the government is going. It is something we will be watching very closely. I hope some of the arguments we have been raising in this House

about the unfairness of taxes in this province and this country, about the fact that even with this new federal budget we have 87,000 major money-making corporations that are not paying a cent of taxes—I forget the number over \$50,000, but all 40 families in Canada that make more than \$250,000 were not paying a cent of taxes. I do not know how the government justifies that. I certainly cannot and I do not think the ordinary public can justify it.

It seems to me that whether it is speculation taxes to cool down the price of housing, which this government obviously does not like; whether it is fairer ways of dealing with our Ontario health insurance plan premiums; whether it is taking a look at the companies and individuals making a lot of money who are not paying a fair share of taxes; whether it is the banks, financial institutions and trust companies, almost everybody for the first time—even the chamber, I am told—expected to see some tax increases in the federal budget and did not get them. I do not have the figures now. I have had them, but we are one of the lowest countries in the world in terms of the percentage rate we are taxing the financial institutions. They are really getting a free ride.

Whether we take a look at some of those means of raising fairer taxes in this province or not, I think the tax approach the Treasurer takes in the coming budget to be presented very shortly, along with whether or not he heeds one other appeal that was made in the committee hearings that dealt with the Thomson committee report and the prebudget hearings that the standing committee on finance and economic affairs of this Legislature had, whether he takes it to heart—let's for the first time in Ontario try to marry what we really want to do in terms of people, in terms of direction, in terms of priority, in terms of how well our economy is really performing.

Is it cutting down unemployment? Is it meeting the challenge of handicapped and disabled people? Is it meeting the challenge of safety and health problems in our community? Is it meeting the challenge of the all too large percentage of people who are poor in our province?

I would like to see the budget lay out the social challenges and the budgetary direction. I think the two have to be married. I think it cannot be a budget in isolation. That is where maybe a role could have been played as a starting measure in the throne speech, which certainly was not played, but I hope that when the budget comes down, it does deal in tax fairness and does not

deal with the usual, mostly regressive methods whereby we have usually raised a pile of money in Ontario, and that whatever it says in the way of taxes is done in the context of what is our social program and social direction in the province. I think we might start seriously to deal with the fact that we are and should be our brother's and sister's keepers in this province.

1640

The Deputy Speaker: Are there any questions and comments on the member's statement?

Mr D. R. Cooke: I found the member's comments very useful, as I always do, and I think a lot of them can be taken to heart. I did not hear everything he said, but I think I heard about 90 per cent of it.

I was waiting for some comments from the member for Hamilton East on the suggestion that is being ruminated in the media right now about a payroll tax. It is something he has raised in the past and I am just wondering whether he is still endorsing it.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there other comments from other members? If not, does the member wish to respond?

Mr Mackenzie: If I were being the least bit unkind, I would think that the member of the committee, who knows the comments I have made on this, was trying to put me on the spot and say, "Hey, aren't you agreeing with your leader?"

I do not agree with the payroll tax as a major item, and I am talking about the funding of our Ontario health insurance plan. The proposal for payroll tax that I do endorse that was specifically made to our committee, because it meets an issue we have not been able to resolve in Ontario, is the issue of the benefits of workers in terms of plant closures, bankruptcies and the resulting loss of work and jobs.

The federation came in—it was not our proposal originally, but I think it makes some sense—with a proposal that said, "You need some kind of scheme." It seems difficult to lay out just what kind of an insurance scheme you might have, but they suggested a payroll tax. It would be a very small payroll tax in their method but would still raise a considerable amount of money that could be earmarked. I also know the government does not like earmarking. Massey, I guess, is one of the classic cases of workers who have lost their jobs and benefits and in some cases what used to be their pensions as well. There is some protection against that now, not everything we need but some protection, and the

kind of medical and insurance coverage they have could be covered out of this specific allocation of funds.

Their proposal was one that I think is worth taking to heart. I can see it being a potential working one. I am open if there is a better suggestion than that, but it was designed for a specific problem that, once again, we have raised in this House—I personally have raised it—the fact that if we cannot reach an agreement with the feds, who are usually the holdup or cited as the holdup to this, we should be setting up some kind of provincial plan to deal with workers who lose their money, their benefits, their severance and a number of things in a bankruptcy case or even in some of the plant closure cases that are not necessarily related to bankruptcy.

I think there is merit in that specific suggestion. I do not see it as a major fund-raising deal, including OHIP, which is one of the major costs in our society.

Mr J. M. Johnson: I am very pleased to have the opportunity to participate in this debate. Hopefully, my comments will be accepted in the same positive and constructive way that has always been my way in this assembly. I would like to do something very strange: I would like to concentrate on the throne speech and what was in it.

While the throne speech mentions "Economic Development," "Education," "Social Assistance," "Safe and Secure Communities," "Health" and "Environment" as the government's priorities for this session of Parliament, there is little of substance contained under these very broad headings, "Education" perhaps being the exception.

Here the government proposes to ensure that all school boards offer half-day junior kindergarten for four-year-olds, and in addition states that it will provide funding for school boards to offer full-day senior kindergarten programs where classroom space permits. While there is certainly merit in this proposal, nothing has been said about how the government intends to implement or finance these initiatives, and offering senior kindergarten programs only where classroom space is available creates an unfair situation for those areas where space is not available.

The government's commitment to "accessibility to quality health care for every Ontarian" has been restated, while the waiting lists for people requiring surgery in hospitals continues to mount, bringing into question the government's definition of "accessibility." I intend to deal with this issue in more detail in a few minutes.

On the environmental front, leadership in the area of protection of the environment is again promised. To finance the cost, the government intends to set up a new lottery fund, Cleantario. Surely, protection of our environment should not be dependent upon the proceeds of a lottery. A far more serious commitment is needed.

There is not a great deal that can be said about the initiatives contained in the speech from the throne for the second session of the 34th Parliament. Of more significance perhaps is what it does not contain: failure to include, among its immediate priorities, the crisis in housing, the elderly, the disabled, the workers, and the urgent need to improve Ontario's deteriorating road system and municipal sewage and water systems. Nothing has been said about agriculture or pension reform. While these have not necessarily disappeared from the government's agenda, they certainly no longer appear to be priorities.

I would like to start with education. The Minister of Education (Mr Ward) was in the House a few minutes ago and that is why I felt that education would be important to start with.

The throne speech's number two priority is, "Education: A Springboard to Opportunity." It goes on to state that in the last session the government "provided significant new funding to reduce class sizes in grades 1 and 2." This sounds like a very sensible proposal and I accept it to a degree, but surely, it makes more sense to eliminate the portables we have in so many parts of this province before we start reducing class sizes in other schools that are fortunate enough not to have portables. The new funding they have provided for this initiative could certainly have helped to eliminate some of the thousands of permanent portables in our school system.

The throne speech goes on to say, about education, "All school boards will offer half-day junior kindergarten for four-year-olds as well as half-day senior kindergarten for five-year-olds," and will "provide funding for school boards to offer full-day senior kindergarten programs, where classroom space permits." As I mentioned earlier, that leads to great inequity. Some boards will not have the opportunity because they do not have the space to provide that facility.

It mentions providing funding for school boards. Is that full provincial funding or is it merely partial funding at a decreasing percentage, which has been a policy of this government?

The minister goes into a great deal of fanfare to announce new programs without any consultation with the boards. He suggests programs they should be involved in, and indeed he mandates

the programs, but leaves it up to the boards to pick up the cost. This is not fair. Surely they should have some input into costly programs.

An article in the *Toronto Sun* just a few days ago—this is very important to the city members—mentions the comments of councillor Tom Jakobek, "Metro council and the school boards should be given 'an ultimatum to bring expenses down to rate of inflation.'" It goes on to say: "'How in God's name are people going to be able to afford the mass spending increases of different levels of government?' North York Mayor Mel Lastman blamed the school board and Metro council for the high North York tax rate."

For the people living in the city, they must be aware that some of these boards and municipal councils have very little control over what this government is doing.

Mr Faubert: Fourteen per cent over last year.

Mr J. M. Johnson: The school boards are mandated by the Ministry of Education to cut class sizes, start new programs and spend money without consultation. No input from the boards; then the boards are criticized for not bringing expenses down. We cannot have the two things. Surely, the former councillor from Scarborough and area would realize that this is an impossibility.

Mr Faubert: Metropolitan Toronto got 14 per cent more than it got last year.

Interjections.

1650

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Only the member for Wellington has the floor.

Mr J. M. Johnson: I believe that, while the Minister of Education was very generous in some areas in providing capital funding this year—

[Applause]

Mr J. M. Johnson: When the applause dies down, I would like to mention that he also went on to state that the transfer of capital costs will be reduced from 75 per cent to 60 per cent. As I understand it, they receive 90 per cent of the 60 per cent, which translates into 52 per cent.

The minister takes credit for providing, for example, \$12 million for Wellington county, of which the county has to pick up \$6 million. Why does he not take credit for his \$6 million and say the local taxpayers are going to have to pick up their \$6 million?

Mr Villeneuve: That's the new math, Jack.

Mr J. M. Johnson: That is the new math, my colleague says. The Speaker has indicated I should speak in his direction. I will, sir.

I might just say on the transfer payments as well that the provincial share of funding has decreased. It seemed to me that in the 1987 election, and even in the 1985 election, this Liberal Party promised to increase the provincial share of funding back up to the traditional 60 per cent. The former government was badly criticized for letting it fall to 47 per cent. Mr Speaker, you will be disappointed to know that it has now fallen to approximately 42 per cent.

Mr Villeneuve: And still in free fall.

Mr J. M. Johnson: And still in free fall.

I had the opportunity at one o'clock today to talk to one of the main people at the Wellington County Roman Catholic Separate School Board. They are very disturbed at what is going to happen to their budget. They tried their best to hold their budget at \$30 million; they will possibly have to go to \$31 million. They have cut out everything they could possibly cut out and they are going to end up with a deficit of over \$1 million, but they will have to set their rate at 12 per cent as opposed to 20 per cent.

They just feel that 20 per cent is too high for the taxpayers to absorb, so they are going to go into a deficit financial position, in my understanding, for the first time in the history of the board. For operating costs, they are going to have to deficit-finance \$1 million.

If they do that, I submit they are following along the same lines as the provincial and federal governments and will end up leaving our children with the legacy of paying for their own education. Possibly that is the intention of this government.

The Wellington County Board of Education has set its rate at 11.6 per cent, the high being 22 per cent for the town of Palmerston. This means the average taxpayer will be faced with an increase of approximately \$100 per house. This, along with increases in the federal budget and the certainty of an increase in the provincial budget, will mean that the taxpayers are being shafted once more.

I will now move on to section 3: The priority of this government in social assistance is moving from dependence to self-reliance. It states, "New reforms will be introduced to help individuals move from a life of dependence to a life of self-sufficiency and transform welfare cheques into paycheques."

Just to show members how positive I am, I want to commend the initiative of this thrust and hope that the government will indeed follow through with it. It is one of the first portions of the Thomson report. Our party supports this, and I

think that everybody in this assembly would certainly be supportive of the initiative of helping these people get off the social assistance programs.

I had intended to go into many details of the report, but I just want to mention a couple that bother me. After hearing from 1,500 different groups, the Social Assistance Review Committee made several recommendations. I think a few of them bother me. One is that the government is spending \$2 billion a year, yet one million people in Ontario are caught in the welfare trap and 37 per cent of them are children. That is very unfortunate because these young people have no opportunity and it is certainly not their fault.

Those who use the system, those who work in it and those who pay for it all agree that it is just not working any more. As so often happens in large organizations, rules and regulations become more important than the people they were supposed to help. Just to give one example, under our present system a single mother in need of assistance is eligible for as many as 36 different rates of payment, depending on her circumstances. How in the world can anybody possibly figure that one out?

Here are some revealing figures that concern me—I hope they concern most members and certainly the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr Sweeney): 37 per cent of recipients are children under 18 years of age; 32 per cent of recipients are disabled and average five years on assistance; 30 per cent are single parents averaging three to four years on assistance, and 14 per cent are employable but lack the skills necessary for today's market; however, they only need help for an average of seven months, and 40 per cent are off assistance after only three months.

These are people who do not want to be on welfare. They would much rather have their dignity and be self-supporting and independent. I am sure that all the members would agree that our main goal should be getting people off welfare and into the workforce where they can contribute to society.

I will now move on to section 4: "Safe and Secure Communities." The throne speech goes on to say, "Maintaining a sense of safety and security in our communities is critical to our province's future wellbeing and development." I fully support that thrust as well.

I might just mention that I had an experience a week ago tonight. I was going out to dinner with my son. As we were walking beside Allen Gardens, two young lads, one about eight and

one about 10, were kibitzing, I thought, with this poor, unfortunate wino. Then it appeared that they were not kibitzing but indeed attacking him. They would leap at him with judo chops and hit him in the legs knocking him down and then proceed to kick him. I naturally told them where to go and they took off.

I was really disappointed to see this type of thing happening in the middle of an evening in downtown Toronto. I know that it happens with older children like young teenagers and that. But here are two children, one nine and one 10 or 11, practising their acts of violence on poor, defenceless people. This old wino had no recourse to self-defence. I just wonder what happens to these kids. By the time they are teenagers, are they bank robbers?

It is a very serious problem and I just would like to dwell on it for a few minutes because it very much emphasized the concern that we should all have for safe and secure communities. In this weekend's Toronto Star edition of Friday, 5 May, there was an article by Catherine Dunphy. I will just read one section. The headline is: "Gang Violence, A Parent's Worst Fear."

One of the articles goes on to say that one mother of two has put her upper Beaches house up for sale, and I quote: "'I want out of this city,' she says. 'If we stay here by the time my son is 14 he will be in a gang—not one of those swarming, but in a gang for protection. What other choice will he have?'" It is very sad that young people are placed in this predicament. It is sad that families are concerned about it.

1700

I might just mention Maclean's magazine, 2 January edition: "A Portrait of the Nation" is how the editor refers to it. It was a poll conducted for Maclean's about the future prospects. "By the year 2001, do you think it will be safe to walk around in cities?" That is the question that was asked. "In 10 or 11 years from now, do you think it will be safe to walk around in cities?"

Some 32 per cent of the respondents said yes; 66 per cent said no. Two out of three people fear that by the year 2001 it will not be safe to walk around in cities. That is a sad commentary on our social fabric, and it is something that we should be very concerned about and doing something to try to correct.

I might just mention on the same subject that another article appeared in the Toronto Star on the weekend. It was a letter from, I assume it was a mother but certainly a parent, to the press explaining her predicament. The heading is,

"Family Broken by Truant Son, 15, Who Lies and Steals." She goes on to describe how she has lost control of her son and she cannot do anything with him. Under the present legislation, she is practically in a straitjacket as to what she can do.

"We are concerned, caring, conscientious parents," she says, "committed to raising loving, decent citizens and having our hands bound at every turn. We are expected to try harder, care more and seek help when he refuses to do so. Nowhere are children judged responsible for their actions as they manipulate.

"My son is well aware of the rights he has in society and under the Young Offenders Act and Child and Family Services Act. We are quickly becoming aware that he seemingly has all the rights and we have all the responsibilities. Our son is not abused in any sense of the word, but we feel helpless in this society."

There is something wrong with a society when parents are placed in this predicament that they have literally no control of their children because the state is so dictating. These two young children I mentioned who were attacking the poor individual in the park needed a good slap on the side of something.

It goes on to state in the "Safe and Secure Communities" section of the throne speech that we need to "reform our court system to provide improved access to justice." I support that. The courts then should much better reflect the seriousness of the crimes as well. More consideration must be given to victims of crime, improved financial compensation, guidance and counselling. We have a lot to do in the field of helping to solve the problem of maintaining secure communities.

One area of concern, and it has been addressed by the member for Muskoka-Georgian Bay (Mr Black) to a degree, is the problem relating to drugs. It is a major problem. In the Insight section of the Toronto Star on Sunday, 7 May, there is a whole section dealing with the problem of drugs. They pose the question, "Are we losing the toughest street battle of our time?"

It goes on to mention young people of nine and 10 years of age as being introduced to drugs for the first time. Crack, for instance, is a deadly, addictive drug. It is my understanding that once they are addicted to it, once they become acquainted with it, they cannot control their addiction. There are several articles on it, and they just highlight a major concern that people have with the drug problem in our society.

In the same section it mentions Dr Maris Andersons, a director of the Alliance for a

Drug-Free Canada and former chief of staff at Toronto's Donwood Institute. She says that: "Crack now qualifies as an epidemic in this city. If AIDS can be considered an epidemic, then certainly crack has to be considered as one too."

They go on to mention that while they understand the police are doing practically everything they can to solve the problem—and I certainly support the police forces in this province, the municipal as well as provincial. I think they are doing an excellent job and I want to commend them for the work they have done and are doing, not only in the drug field but in the rest of the criminal field. They do mention in this article that all the drug officers in the world will not stop it; it is going to have to come down to education.

To go on, in another section they say: "Cocaine-crack is also cited in a phenomenal upsurge of violent crimes. A 1988 police report showed that murder, sexual assaults, robberies and other violent crimes shot up more than 92 per cent in the previous five years. In 1983 Metro residents reported 12,999 violent crimes; in 1987 the police handled 24,945 in that category," from a little under 13,000 up to nearly 25,000. It is a tremendous increase and something we should all be concerned about.

In my opinion, education is one of the answers, if not the most important answer. As I mentioned, the member for Muskoka-Georgian Bay deserves credit for his report on this urgent issue.

Just on a personal note, one of my best friends is Bill Moody of Mount Forest. He is in charge of Lions Quest Canada, one of the best drug education programs in all of Canada. So if I am allowed to make a little plug, I would suggest that any members who do have a problem and would like information should contact their local Lions Club. I am sure they can provide some assistance.

The next item I would like to deal with is "Promoting Healthy Lifestyles and Preserving Quality Health Care." Just to show how impartial and fairminded I am, I would like to pay tribute to the Minister of Health for her recent announcement of \$5 million targeted for an attack on breast cancer. This is certainly a worthwhile program. It is an excellent initiative the minister has taken and one I can very strongly support.

It goes on to mention in the article that appeared in the Toronto Star today that hopefully: "By 1995, a total of 36 centres are to be in place, serving an estimated 300,000 women. The

goal is to reduce the number of deaths by 40 per cent." This is a very commendable proposal.

I would like to reiterate the comments made by the Health critic for our party, the member for Parry Sound (Mr Eves), who indicated to the minister that he felt the program should come into place at an earlier age and continue to a later age for women. I am not qualified to judge the medical evidence, but I do feel whatever we can do to support this initiative we should do.

I would like to make one suggestion, that these screening centres should be worked into our small-town hospitals. In the cities it could be different, but in small towns and rural Ontario we have the bases in our hospitals and hopefully it would make the hospitals more viable if we had this type of program, along with some of the other programs the minister is contemplating. I would certainly support that concept.

1710

I had intended to be very blunt and criticize the minister very strongly on her lack of support for the Victorian Order of Nurses. I am very pleased that she did recognize the concerns that the VON has expressed and also because many of the members in this Legislature, certainly on the opposition side, have brought it to her attention. I would take this opportunity to congratulate the minister on partially looking after the problem, at least recognizing that it is a problem and providing the funding that they need at the present time. However, I would like to make a few more comments on the VON and the problems that it is encountering.

In the throne speech it mentioned being strong in support of families and communities. I would assume that the VON home care falls under that category, and rightly so.

The thing I cannot understand is that when it has been pointed out on numerous occasions, and anybody with a reasonable grasp and intelligence here, a little common sense, should understand that if you can keep someone in their own home at \$40 a day rather than in a nursing home at twice or three times that or in a hospital at \$400 a day, it has to make economic sense, as well as being in the best interests of the individual and the families.

It is the same old story. If you have to spend a dime and you can save a dollar, it makes sense. The government is criticizing the opposition every time we suggest that it fund the VON with a couple of million dollars. We have tried to point that the \$2 million will save \$10 million, \$20 million or \$30 million.

Ontario's home care program is administered by 38 different agencies throughout the province and this has to create a problem, because it should be more concentrated and have a better depth of understanding of how the home care service could really support the people who need health care but do not have to be confined to hospitals. They end up in the hospitals because there is no place else for them.

It has been pointed out by several members, so I will not go into detail, but the ageing population is certainly going to create a problem and I think this would be one answer for our escalating health care costs.

As I say, I had intended to go into this in detail, but I will not except to mention that I did meet with Mrs Barbara Phillips, executive director of the VON in my area. She represents the Guelph-Wellington-Dufferin branch, so that does take in a couple of Liberal members. I will not mention the member for Guelph (Mr Ferraro) and the member for Dufferin-Peel (Mrs Wilson). I will speak on their behalf because they are not here to speak for themselves and just say that on behalf of my constituents and their constituents I would like to publicly thank Barb Phillips and the VON, because they are a dedicated and caring group of people and certainly service the needs of our citizens in those three areas. I wish her well and their endeavours to continue and I hope they do not have to come to the minister in six months or a year and request more funding, because surely the minister has seen the light of day and will have the funds available to provide to these people.

I might just mention that in 1987-88 the VON in this area made over 100,000 visits and in 1988-89 they were close to that figure, 98,306 visits. It would be my feeling that if the minister used her good sense, she would realize that the dollars she is spending on this program would cut down on the health care dollars in the hospitals and other areas. I would encourage her to try to promote more home care service and be more supportive of the VON. Instead of their having a deficit, she should give them extra funding and encourage them to increase their calls and do more work, which would eventually—in fact, even in the short term—save her money.

I come to a part in the speech that I am a little concerned will be misconstrued, but I intend to give it anyway. This is—I will read from the throne speech—the number 5 priority. I hope it is not fifth on the list, but it is number 5. It reads: "Accessibility to quality health care for every

Ontarian regardless of ability to pay remains a fundamental value and principle of our society."

Last year about this time I had to bring to the attention of the Speaker a constituent of mine, David Elgie, a disabled citizen from Fergus who needed a hip replacement. He was advised at first that his hip replacement would take approximately a year. Then it was extended to a year and a half, and then eventually to two full years. By that time, he would have been completely immobilized and not able to walk; in fact, a cripple. Fortunately, things worked around and he was able to obtain his operation. The minister certainly helped in that regard.

The problem I have—this is on a personal note, and that is why I hesitate to mention it—is that my wife, Marnie, falls into the same category. She had a knee-replacement operation performed in 1982 by Dr Hugh Cameron of the Orthopaedic and Arthritic Hospital on Wellesley Street. That was in 1982. The replacement joints have now started to deteriorate. She had a meeting with the doctor a couple of weeks ago and the doctor advised her that she should have an operation but unfortunately she would have to go on a waiting list. She said that she quite understood that and asked what the waiting period would be—a year, a year and a half? He said: "I'm very sorry to tell you—in fact, I'm ashamed to tell you—but it is three years."

There is something drastically wrong with our health care system when an individual has to wait three years for an operation. A year ago, when I mentioned that David Elgie had to wait two years, the minister stated in her response: "We discussed this issue in the House on a number of occasions, and as the members know, I am very concerned about the length of some waiting lists at hospitals for specific procedures. We are at all times reviewing that. What it tells me is that we have to have the kind of planning process in place so that we can address where to expand services to meet those kinds of needs."

In one year, instead of decreasing the waiting list to a year and a half or a year, which would be acceptable, it has now gone the opposite way and it is three years. I just feel that there is something the matter when an individual who is in pain and who is suffering has to wait two, three or four years for an operation. The operation is either needed or it is not. If it is needed, it should be done in a reasonable period of time. The only other course of action is, if one wants to postpone it long enough, the individual may not be around. Other than that, I cannot see any reason. If we need 1,000 operations in a year and we can only

handle 500, the 500 builds up for the next year and multiplies so that in a very few years people will be five and 10 years on waiting lists. That just does is not sensible.

The minister approached me on this last Tuesday and I thank her for that. She mentioned that there are other doctors and other hospitals and she would provide me with a list. When we talk about accessibility to quality health care, quality means to me that one has an opportunity to try to select a doctor and a hospital that one wants, especially in this instance where the doctor did perform the operation six or seven years ago. Surely it is only common sense that one goes back to the same doctor.

I am not pleading this case on behalf of my wife, because she does not want to be moved up on the list. She simply wants to see the list cut back so that people can have their operations in a reasonable period of time. When I read these promises of accessibility to quality health care for every Ontarian, I have a great deal of difficulty with it.

1720

I will move on to the last item in the throne speech, "Continuing leadership in environmental protection." It reads: "A clean and safe environment is one of the cornerstones of our effort to promote better health. Ontario will continue to demonstrate leadership in environmental protection to ensure the quality of our air, water and food."

I certainly concur with that thought. I am pleased the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley) is in attendance today and I hope he will take note of some of my very positive items of constructive criticism. I mentioned earlier, and possibly the minister missed it, that I felt the environment was too important to be left to the uncertain funding of a lottery draw. I would have hoped that he only intends to gain some of his money from this. But the perception is that it is maybe not the best idea.

I think that possibly he was reading this article that appeared in *Business Week*, 10 April 1989. It says: "A national lottery is not such a long shot." It goes on to say: "Imagine a tax nobody is required to pay, yet it raises billions of dollars. Imagine that people gladly stand in line to pay it, and no one considers it a burden. A fantasy? Not at all. It's a government lottery. 'That's not a tax,' you say, 'It's just gambling.' Well, it is gambling, but to many economists it is also an excise tax on a commodity, a lottery ticket that happens to be supplied by a government monopoly that sets the price. This year, 28 states and the

District of Columbia are running lotteries, which have been the fastest-growing source of state revenues in the 1980s. The cash-strapped federal government may soon want to follow suit."

I think that maybe our Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) has read this article and possibly in the budget speech in a few weeks we may be faced with several lotteries. I hope not.

I point out to the Minister of the Environment that it goes on to ask: "Worried about the environment? Play the Environmental Protection Agency's green lottery." The minister calls it *Cleantario*, but a green lottery sounds the same. It closes by saying, "Let the games begin." I am not sure we are on the right track.

In the same vein, I will swing into something that was not in the speech, affordable housing, because it ties into my concern with the environment. The Minister of the Environment has a very important role to play, if not the single most important decision to make, in resolving the question of affordable housing.

In several of my municipalities, one of the major problems with providing housing stock is the difficulty they are having with his ministry in getting approvals through. In some instances it is a matter of delay. The town of Fergus last March or April requested approval for a plan that did not require any funding from his ministry. It was simply a matter of approval. They were notified that they would not receive any approval or any notification of either approval or disapproval for approximately five months. That would have put them into October or November for the approvals.

Surely there is some way the minister can speed up the process if a project is in order, so that they can get an approval in four, five or six weeks, and then can get on with the job. In municipalities that do not have the necessary municipal services of sewage and water, they cannot provide housing stock. Any of the lots they do have for sale are sold at prohibitive prices because of the very low numbers. The people who own them, and many of them are speculators and developers, force the price up.

The Minister of Housing (Ms Hošek) has indicated to all the municipalities that they should try to provide 25 per cent of their housing stock in the affordable price range. That is not a bad idea, but when you force a lot into the \$50,000, \$60,000 and \$70,000 price range in small towns in rural Ontario, you are putting the price of the house up to \$150,000 and higher.

In the last three years, the price of housing in my part of the province has doubled. The reason

for most of it is the lack of housing lots. If the minister would provide the services needed or assist the municipalities in being able to put in the municipal-served water and sewage, they could open up more land, sell the lots at affordable prices and create affordable housing. The two go hand in hand.

I understand the minister does have a limit on his dollars and this should go to the Treasurer, but it would be just as well to provide money to his ministry to provide the services as to provide money to the Minister of Housing to provide nonprofit housing, affordable housing and things of this nature, because we would create the housing stock and it would be more benefit to the people in those communities in the municipalities themselves.

I have two towns and three villages that are really dependent upon the minister's good graces in the next short while. Some of them have been waiting for some time, so I do urgently request him to give consideration. That was a pitch to the minister.

The Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr Riddell) is not here, but I would like to just make a short comment as well on the lack of any initiative in the throne speech pertaining to agriculture. Agriculture is one of the most important industries in my riding of Wellington, and I was disappointed that there was not a single word mentioned in the throne speech. I would hope it does not indicate that agriculture is not a priority of this government, but unfortunately that is the way it appears.

Last week I read an editorial in the *Erin Advocate*. The heading is, "OMAF Sells Out." It goes on to say that the Minister of Agriculture and Food failed to protect farm land in the Snelgrove area in Caledon. I am very familiar with it, because Caledon was in my old riding.

I am pleased that the minister is here now, because I wanted to address this to him. I was concerned that he was not defending the position he held earlier to defend this farm land. Maybe there are reasons he did not do so. There are always conflicting uses for land, and there always will be fights over it.

But I would have to feel that some other minister has more clout in cabinet or this minister would not lose these battles. He is too tough a minister to allow this land to go out of production unless there is a reason. I am just encouraging him to try. If the Minister of Agriculture and Food does not appear to be the leading minister to preserve farm land, then there is no ministry in

the government that will care. So he does have to set an example.

I will not dwell on this, as I did mention it last week. I simply say that he does have a responsibility and he does have to preserve not only the farm land but our farms.

I am winding up very shortly. I have just a few more comments.

This government has failed, and failed badly, in one major area. It has failed to open a meaningful line of communication with the local municipal councils and school boards in this province. This is clearly highlighted by an event that occurred a month ago.

On Thursday, 30 March, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario held an emergency meeting, the first such meeting in its 90-year history, for the purpose of endorsing a resolution opposing the provincial government's new direction to decrease financial support to municipalities.

1730

Representatives from 700 member municipalities attended this meeting and there were also two Liberal members in attendance that I noticed. Maybe I missed a few, but I could only see two. One is here on the far side, the member for Grey (Mr Lipsett).

The underlying reason for this meeting was AMO's concern with respect to the increased trend by the provincial government to shift additional responsibilities on to the local tax base. AMO certainly has my support in opposing the government of Ontario's new direction with respect to provincial-municipal financial relations.

I am seriously concerned over the many recent initiatives undertaken by the government which are placing new demands on municipalities in areas which have not previously been their responsibility: courtroom security, Sunday shopping regulation, capital school construction and the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement, the Environment ministry's program to reduce toxic contaminants and industrial municipal effluents discharged into Ontario's waterways, to name a few.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that the government intends to adopt a policy which would require that the property taxpayer assumes a greater financial burden to offset costs in areas of provincial responsibility previously funded through the provincial revenue base.

This was singularly demonstrated by the Minister of Education in his recent meeting with the Wellington County Board of Education and

the Wellington County Roman Catholic Separate School Board when he strongly recommended that the boards meet any shortfall in their capital funding requirements through the issuing of debentures. In other words, boards should make up the shortfall by borrowing the costs which will ultimately be borne by the property taxpayer.

I was very pleased to have had the opportunity to attend the AMO emergency meeting and discuss these vital issues with representatives from my 21 municipalities. As you will know, Mr Speaker, the AMO resolution was unanimously endorsed by its membership.

I sincerely hope that this meeting was not an exercise in futility and that this Liberal government will accept the good advice received from the municipal level of governments. We should all understand that our municipal politicians have a responsibility to their taxpayers, and I commend them for their initiative in this regard.

In closing, may I say quite clearly that we are not doing enough? We are failing to ensure the future wellbeing of our children and their children. As I mentioned earlier, in Maclean's magazine's Decima poll conducted for its 2 January 1989 edition, in an article entitled "A Portrait of the Nation," some disturbing facts surfaced.

People were asked about future prospects. To the question, "By the year 2001, do you think average families may afford city houses?" 24 per cent said yes, 75 per cent said no. Three out of four people do not think they will ever be able to buy their own home in slightly over 10 years. So much for affordable housing.

Even more disturbing was that when asked if they felt it will be safe to walk around in cities, 32 two per cent said yes and 66 per cent said no. I mentioned that earlier, but I want to re-emphasize it. Two out of three people said that in 10 years' time they would be afraid for their safety, that our city streets would be unsafe. Yet in the throne speech, one of the six priorities, in fact the number four priority, is keeping our communities and neighbourhoods safe and secure. I truly hope we have the commitment to do so.

In the throne speech the first two priorities are, number one, building on our economic strengths to ensure tomorrow's growth and, number two, investing in the future of our children by making our education system a more effective springboard to opportunity.

These are certainly commendable goals which we should all support, but only if we are willing to pay for them. We cannot burden our children

with our debt. We do them no favours if we provide them with everything and leave them a legacy of debt. With an ageing population and a declining workforce, our young people will have enough financial problems to pay their own way without inheriting a mountain of debt from our generation. We must learn to live within our means. If we build schools for our children, surely we would not expect them to pay for those schools.

The former Prime Minister of Great Britain, Harold Macmillan, said, "History is apt to judge harshly those who sacrifice tomorrow for today." All of us, as members of this Legislature, have a responsibility to manage the affairs of this province in the most prudent way possible, looking after the needs of the people we serve and providing for the wellbeing of the future generations that will follow us. Let us not sacrifice tomorrow for today.

Hon Mr Riddell: I listened very carefully as the honourable member talked about the Ministry of Agriculture and Food budget. He referred to an editorial that appeared in the *Erin Advocate* entitled "OMAF Sells Out." With the honourable gentleman, the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (Mr Villeneuve), sitting in the Legislature, I want to put the question to the previous speaker as to whether he feels that the Minister of Agriculture and Food should freeze all agricultural land in perpetuity.

If that is his belief, has he discussed this with the honourable member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, or would he rather see the guidelines recognize the planning process for permitting urban growth? Proposals for urban development are reviewed according to the criteria of the guidelines, and economic climate, which was mentioned in that editorial, is not one of the evaluation criteria. Rather the criteria deal with the need for more land to accommodate forecasted population growth.

With respect to the development proposal for Snelgrove in the town of Caledon, the criteria of the guidelines were definitely applied. The specific proposal and situation is now quite different from that of five years ago, when the development of Snelgrove was first proposed.

Mr Villeneuve: It was a different minister.

Hon Mr Riddell: My honourable friend the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry should not talk too loudly, because he is the one who raises Cain whenever a severance is not granted in his area on good agricultural land. Those two had better get together and decide

what it is they want the food land guidelines to do.

Mr Villeneuve: I too want to comment on the very, very eloquent presentation by my colleague the member for Wellington (Mr J. M. Johnson) on the speech from the throne. It is certainly an area where common sense has to prevail. I come from an area where we do have a lot of marginal land, as the Minister of Agriculture and Food so well knows. It is a situation where we are preventing development in a rural area, but on very marginal land. Many times, what occurs here is that we are told, because it is located in a general agricultural area, this marginal land can never do anything except grow weed. I do not think that is right.

I think the area that I represent needs to have population increases. That land is good for absolutely nothing else but growing houses. I think it is an artificial situation when the ministry representatives are calling this absolutely no development. I can cite the members an example of a spent gravel pit. I did go to 801 Bay Street and I fought the recommendations of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. They were changed, because common sense finally did prevail.

A spent gravel pit is not class 1, 2 and 3 soil. That is the kind of thing I think should prevail when bureaucracies get involved and apply the strict rule of the law; then we have no flexibility. Of course, we do not want to see land frozen in perpetuity; what we want to see is common sense applied by the ministries.

1740

Mr Pollock: I just want to put a few things on the record too. I have a situation in my riding along the same lines, where a land owner who owns a farm of approximately 125 acres wanted to change the zoning on that farm from agricultural to rural. When he notified all the surrounding people, there were two other farmers who were really concerned about this because there was a tile drain that went right down through this farm and that tile drain drained their lands, so they were concerned about it.

The reason I got involved was that these two farmers came to my office and said that the person in the Napanee office for the Ministry of Agriculture and Food had recommended this zoning change. These farmers said they had no problems with selling some lots out along the highway, because right along the highway there was bedrock. They had no problems with selling lots out there, but they did not want the zoning on this whole piece of property changed.

The feedback that we have had from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food staff in Napanee was that the reason they recommended the whole thing be changed was that there was some bedrock there and therefore they did not want to break it down into small pieces of property.

As far as I am concerned, there are all kinds of farms that have good land in eastern Ontario, and then maybe they have a small chunk of poor land. We should preserve the good land and let them build houses on the poor land. Those are my concerns.

Mr Tatham: I appreciate the comments made by individuals around parts of the province of Ontario, but I think we have to recognize that class 1 and class 2 land, and maybe class 3 land, should be preserved.

We also have to recognize that when we take other land out of farm production and put it into houses, we change the complex of the representation. You are representing people who are urbanites, and all of a sudden they then control township and county councils, and this reflects on what is going to take place as far as the farmers are concerned. So I think we have to be very careful when we allow severances.

In our own county of Oxford, we are very difficult as far as severances are concerned. We do not allow severances unless there are some very specific rules followed, because when you do that, you are looking for trouble. Some 83 per cent of our land is class 1 and class 2 land. We look after it. We try to keep it in perpetuity, because that is where we grow the food. We know how to grow food in Oxford county. We do a good job at it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr M. C. Ray): Does the member for Wellington care to respond?

Mr J. M. Johnson: I would like to make a couple of comments to the last speaker. The member for Oxford (Mr Tatham) should talk to the minister, if the minister heard what he was saying.

Second, in the editorial that the minister and I made reference to, "OMAF Sells Out," the question is asked: "Why has OMAF changed its mind? It is still class 1 agricultural land." However, the spokesman said the main reason the Ministry of Agriculture and Food is now supporting the development of land is that the economic climate in the area has changed since the ministry first opposed the proposal. It has not changed. It is the same area it was five years ago. The members know there has been very little change. The ministers have changed.

I very strongly support the comments made by my colleagues the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry and the member for Hastings-Peterborough (Mr Pollock). Reasonable, sensible severances are certainly acceptable.

I would give the minister one other bit of advice. There are all kinds of land up in the north, in the area of the member for Grey, that needs to be developed. There is land that is not suitable for feeding goats, and we could have development on that. Why does the ministry not encourage development into some other parts of the province and not all in Brampton?

The member from Brampton South (Mr Callahan) does not want all the growth in Brampton. Send it out to the other parts of the province. We need industrial growth. We need development in the other areas, not all in the Brampton area. The traffic is impossible now. You cannot get to the city.

Hon Mr Riddell: Did you tell the member for Grey his land was no good?

Mr J. M. Johnson: Absolutely not.

I leave the minister with the one thought that if the Minister of Agriculture and Food does not preserve and protect farm land, there is not a minister there who will. He has a responsibility to the people of this province and we will hold him to it.

Mr Owen: I am happy to speak to and also endorse the throne speech that is under discussion by the Legislature. The throne speech sometimes is sort of an eclectic grab-bag where every part of the province is to be recognized and every particular need in the province is to be recognized, identified and singled out. Sometimes there has been great to-do made if any part of the province has been neglected or forgotten, or any aspect of government was forgotten.

What we have chosen to do in this throne speech is to identify what we think are the six main thrusts of where we are going and what is most important to the progress of this province. With each of these thrusts, we can identify where we came from because we have, in various ministries, been supporting each of these identifications or directions.

The first we identified was that this province must continue to provide leadership in order to build on the economic strengths we already have in order to ensure tomorrow's growth. We have been doing that. We have established the Ontario Training Corp. This government has allocated \$50 million annually to combat illiteracy. In my own area, for example, I have been able to see that funding has gone to the Barrie Literacy

Council for its worthwhile work. We also have the Laubach literacy program in our area.

For a number of years, I defended people who were charged with criminal matters. I was able to see that so often the people who were charged with serious criminal matters suffered from a lack of grasp of basic language, basic English. As I saw that they could not communicate, could not read or write properly, they became increasingly frustrated and would lash out at society for what society had done to handicap them.

In our jails in our area, as across the province, we have many volunteers going on a regular basis into the jails, working with this very serious problem and helping the accused and those serving time to learn a better grasp of the English language to better fit them for work as they progress outside the institution.

This is a government that has introduced the research and development superallowance. This is a government that has created the \$360-million northern Ontario heritage fund and the six centres of entrepreneurship, and committed itself to \$116 million to the industry research program.

This is a government that has implemented the centres of excellence program, but it is a government that is not theorizing only. It is a government that has been very hands-on in its programs. Let me give members an example from my own riding.

The largest industrial employer in Barrie is General Tire Canada, which is owned by Continental of Germany. We knew in Barrie that General Tire was in difficult times. It had not upgraded its equipment and machinery properly. It was still in bias ply production, rather than having switched over to radial tires. We knew they were in difficulty. A matter of weeks after the election in September 1987 I was able to sit down with the head of General Tire, Gary Pyle, and some of his staff, and the then-mayor of Barrie, Ross Archer, and some of his staff. We tried to determine what we could do to salvage the direction and viability of the General Tire plant.

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We looked at the other plants that were owned by Continental of Germany. We knew they had our plant. We knew they had an investment in plants in Illinois, in North Carolina and in Mexico. We reviewed, if we were in the position of Continental, what we would do to put the thrust or the money to restore and salvage the investment. How could we make sure they would choose Barrie as the investment rather than one of the other plant locations?

We reviewed the pluses and minuses of Barrie, Illinois, North Carolina and Mexico. Once we had done that, we asked if we could meet with the Premier (Mr Peterson) here at Queen's Park. We came down here to Queen's Park and met with the Premier and some of his staff.

One of the major strengths of the Premier, and he has many, is that he has a knowledge of industry, production and marketing in industry. The Premier took what we presented him with and what his own staff was able to provide him with and then went to Germany in December of that year. He sat down with the executive of Continental. It came back to me by way of the executive in General Tire Canada in Barrie that Continental was very impressed with the knowledgeability of the Premier and his approach, and he did a very fine job of persuading.

So a few months ago, the Premier was able to come to Barrie and announce that his efforts had paid off and that Ontario would be sharing in a \$159-million modernization and expansion of General Tire Canada, with the plant located in my riding of Simcoe Centre and in the city of Barrie.

The program, which is extended over five years in two phases, will result in the replacement of existing bias tire technology with advanced radial passenger and light truck tire production technology. Ontario has approved an \$11.5-million concessional loan as well as a \$2.5-million forgivable loan towards training costs.

I admit I have borne the brunt of some criticism for that investment on the part of Ontario taxpayers. But at stake were the present 800 jobs in that plant which would have been lost. At stake would have been all the feeder industries around, which number from three to five for every job in the plant in our area. At stake would have been the loss of the future 300 additional jobs that will be involved in this plant investment.

The federal government approved a duty remission order for \$22.4 million, which is expected to result in a \$9.3-million benefit to the company over a five-year period. Phase 1 will see the expansion of the existing 670,000-square-foot facility by 43,000 feet of equipment upgrading and the implementation of an extensive training program. By the end of 1990, production capacity will reach 12,500 tires.

Phase 2 is to commence in 1991 and will result in a further expansion of \$61 million in machinery and equipment as well as implementation of additional training programs at a cost of

\$8.2 million. Production is expected to reach 19,000 tires per day, of which 16,750 will be radial passenger and light truck tires.

By the conclusion of phase 1 and phase 2, total employment will be around 1,100 workers in that plant alone.

This sector has been recognized as being important to Ontario's overall competitive position in the automotive industry. Discussions with the company and industry indicate that government financial assistance was a necessary catalyst to encouraging re-investment and restructuring.

Restructuring of our major industries was recognized as an important part of Ontario's future competitiveness in the Premier's Council report, *Competing in the New Global Economy*.

I would like to spell out that it is an indication of the dedication, knowledge and commitment of the Premier and this government to see that we are there to progress. When this plant is finished it will be a state-of-the-art operation and will be able to compete with tire production anywhere in the world.

I would like to draw attention to other programs we have been introducing by way of Skills Development. Another of our plants in Barrie, Canplas Industries, which is a plastic plumbing supplies manufacturer, has received a commitment of \$100,000 from the Ontario training trust fund, to match a similar amount raised by Canplas Industries itself. The money will be used to train 180 employees in areas ranging from robotics programming, service and computer skills to administration and motivation.

This plant has told me it has had difficulties getting trained people to come in to take over the jobs that need to be done in the plant. What they have done and what they have worked out with this particular ministry is a training program of the people on the job to handle the challenges that are facing them.

The Barrie and District Training Council also received a \$23,180 operating grant from the Ministry of Skills Development. The community industrial training committees are autonomous organizations made up of volunteers from business, industry, labour, education and government. The committees are funded by the provincial and federal governments.

The employers are increasingly becoming aware of the fact that training and retraining the present labour force is the most efficient way to compete in this rapidly changing world economy. I am delighted that so many of our industries

in my riding are taking advantage of these programs.

This government has indicated it will aggressively pursue new markets for our goods and services, and the industries in my riding are aware that is our objective and that we will be able to target support to the industries which provide maximum benefits for both the workers and the economy.

We support apprenticeship and other program training arrangements that combine education and on-the-job training. I would also like here to point out a program that was initiated in one of the high schools in Barrie, Barrie Central Collegiate Institute, and is now being expanded throughout the high schools across the entire county of Simcoe, and hopefully will be adapted and adopted across the province.

They initially called it the adopt-a-shop program. What happened was that the leaders of our industries went into the shops in our high schools and worked out their own tests of where the students were in their ability and training. After they had identified and gauged their skills, they then brought the students out of the classroom and put them actually into their industries with the up-to-date equipment available to the students.

Some 20 years ago, I recall, the government of the day began to recognize the need for updating the skills of the students in our high schools, and it put equipment into the schools. Unfortunately, what happened very quickly was that the equipment became outdated. The schools could

not afford to continuously upgrade the equipment available to the students.

What we are doing with this plan is that we know the industries must compete with the other industries. We know they must have their tools and machinery right at the very peak of competitiveness. We are therefore able to bring in the students to train on the best equipment available. We have had tremendous co-operation from the Simcoe County Board of Education, the schools, the teachers, the principals and from the industry.

We are now venturing into what they are calling Skills Olympics, where the students in the schools, in the classrooms, are themselves competing with each other to get into the plants for these opportunities. Then with these skills, they are competing with each other to go on and compete with other communities, other cities and other towns to see who has the best skills. It is a competitive experience for them. It has been a sound experience for them and it has given them a feeling of achievement.

One of the difficulties I have seen as I have gone into the elementary schools is an unfortunate attitude by some parents that they do not want their children to become anything but professional people. They want them to become lawyers, doctors or whatever.

I trust we will move to adjourn the debate at this time.

On motion by Mr Owen, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 1800.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Second Session, 34th Parliament

Tuesday, 9 May 1989

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, 9 May 1989

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Farnan: Let us consider the case of the escalating auto insurance premium and the charge that the Premier (Mr Peterson) is guilty of breaking yet another 1987 election promise. The chief witness in this incident is a Cambridge man. Imagine the dialogue between the defence counsel and the chief witness.

"Are you saying the Premier lied to the people of Ontario about auto insurance rates?" defence counsel asks the witness. "I didn't say he lied," the man replies. "I just said I suspected him of doing it." "Now we're getting to it," the lawyer declares. "What made you suspect my client?"

"Well," said the man slowly, "first, just three days before the last provincial election, I was present at the rally in Cambridge at which the Premier said, 'I have a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums'; second, the Premier's government proceeded to introduce two 4.5 per cent increases when its auto insurance review board was being set up; third, the review board's recommendations to jack up auto insurance premiums were partially accepted by the government, and fourth, I'm now paying 17 per cent more in auto insurance than before the Premier made his promise."

"No more questions," snapped the defence lawyer.

COURT FACILITIES

Mr Cousens: Last fall I called upon the Attorney General (Mr Scott) to improve the air quality and heating conditions in the provincial courthouse in Richmond Hill. Today I bring to the attention of this House another example of neglect and disregard for the staff and public at the north Metro provincial courts in North York.

For years staff have complained that the ventilation is extremely poor and that the building is subject to drastic temperature changes. In fact, last month I witnessed first hand the stale and stuffy conditions in the holding cells, where there are 17 staff members and where up to 50 prisoners can be kept. The environment is

stifling. Depending upon the weather conditions on any given day, the temperature can be very hot or very cold; there is no way of adjusting the heat. On a number of occasions, staff have been let off early due to illness caused by these conditions.

It is totally unacceptable that this government on the one hand demands greater standards in air quality by preventing smoking in the workplace, while on the other hand it continues to ignore these conditions in our provincial courtrooms.

What will it take for the Attorney General to act on these injustices? Must I continue to rise in this House every few months to report on the latest occurrence in our provincial courthouses? Let's see that he gets on and does something about it. The circumstances right now are unacceptable and it is unfair and is not right that our government allows this to continue in the Metro north courthouse.

KOMAGATA MARU

Mrs LeBourdais: Having recently attended the ceremony this past Sunday at the St Lawrence Hall to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Komagata Maru, I rise today to join with Ontario's Sikh community in recognition of this event, which marred Canada's human rights reputation.

On 23 May 1914, the Japanese passenger ship Komagata Maru arrived at Burrard Inlet, Vancouver, carrying 376 Indians, 346 of whom were Sikhs. Although these prospective immigrants were British subjects, the Komagata Maru was refused permission to dock and was surrounded by armed guards by order of the government of British Columbia.

Acting in conjunction with federal legislation that retarded the efforts of would-be immigrants, BC officials, in order to ban the landing, found nonexistent diseases among the passengers. Replenishment of food and water was denied. Appeals for intervention to the King of England, the Viceroy of India and the Canadian federal government all were turned down.

The ship was ordered to return home and two months later, in July 1914, the Royal Canadian Navy escorted it out of Vancouver into the Pacific. On arrival at Calcutta in September, it was met by a large contingent of police. A riot

followed when the passengers disembarked. The police opened fire, killing 18 men and wounding another 25.

The intense racial prejudice of that period serves to remind us of the necessity of developing a multicultural society that provides economic, social and political opportunities for all Ontarians.

JUNIOR RANGERS

Mr Wildman: It has come to my attention that the Ministry of Natural Resources is reducing the number of available positions in the Junior Ranger program. In 1988, 1,400 positions were offered. In 1989, 900 positions only will be offered; 500 positions have been lost.

This is completely unacceptable. This reduction represents 20,000 less person-days of work in the public sector of our natural resources in the summer of 1989. This labour will be sorely missed in the stewardship of the natural resources of the people of Ontario.

The Wawa district has had three Junior Ranger camps close since 1983. Beaver Rock Junior Ranger camp and Lake Superior Provincial Park will be closed in 1989. The only camp left will be White Lake Junior Ranger camp in White Lake Provincial Park.

Even more important, this reduction represents a loss of 500 future foresters, tourists, recreationists and environmentally aware citizens. The program is an excellent way of introducing youth to an educational and work experience that remains with them for the rest of their lives. There are many in the resource-based industry and in the Ministry of Natural Resources who had their interest sparked through participation in the Junior Ranger program.

For the benefit of our present resource environment and in future and for the benefit of our youth and the future stewards of our natural resources, the Junior Ranger program should not be reduced. It should be maintained and strongly promoted.

1340

HERITAGE DAY

Mr McLean: My statement concerns a private member's bill I introduced last week. As members are no doubt aware, An Act respecting Heritage Day was introduced by me on 4 May. If passed, this bill would result in the third Monday in February being proclaimed as a public holiday and named Heritage Day.

On a number of occasions in the past, I introduced similar bills aimed at the creation of a

public holiday in February, but I failed to get the support of the majority of my colleagues here in the Legislature and my bills died. That is why I was pleased to hear my colleague the member for High Park-Swansea (Mr Fleet) introduce a bill similar to mine on 4 May. I look forward to working with the member and would appreciate it if he could use his influence on his colleagues to ensure that my private member's bill passes and we celebrate Heritage Day on the third Monday in February 1990.

I think it is important for all of us to have one day of the year set aside for us to reflect on our past, present and future. That is what Ontario's heritage is all about. It is about the kind of province and the quality of the lives we will have in the future.

COTTAGE HOSPITAL

Mr Ballinger: As the provincial member for the riding of Durham-York, I am again pleased to rise on the rump side of the House and pay tribute to the 30th anniversary of the Uxbridge Cottage Hospital. Last Saturday afternoon, I had the honour and the pleasure along with many other dignitaries and several hundred citizens of welcoming His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, Lincoln Alexander, to Uxbridge and to officially participate in the cottage hospital's 30th anniversary celebrations.

Since its official opening in 1959, this practical hospital facility has been providing excellent personal health care services for Uxbridge and area residents. The large turnout of children, parents, seniors, doctors, nurses, hospital staff and former patients in attendance was a wonderful indication of the love and tremendous support Uxbridge has for its own Cottage Hospital.

As former editor Leila Avidsten wrote in an editorial for the Uxbridge Times Journal over 30 years ago, "Few dreams are realized by mere dreaming," And so it was with this hospital. That quote, I believe, pays tribute to the countless volunteers then and now who have made the Cottage Hospital the most respected community facility in all of Uxbridge.

ALGOMA COLLEGE

Mr Morin-Strom: I rise to express concern on behalf of the residents of Sault Ste Marie and the district of Algoma with respect to the attitude this government is taking to the local university, Algoma College.

Two weeks ago, the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mrs McLeod) came into Sault Ste

Marie to release a major study completed by the Ontario Council on University Affairs with respect to the ongoing operation of that affiliate of Laurentian University. In its recommendations, this council, instead of expanding the mandate of that college to serve the needs of the district of Algoma, has provided a standstill recommendation recommending the continuation of the affiliation agreement with Laurentian University.

The minister proposes to put the college further under the thumb of the financial control of Laurentian University, an action which certainly will not be in the best interests of the people of Sault Ste Marie. I ask the minister again, as I wrote to her just one month ago, that she release the report prepared by Dr Meincke on Algoma College. Let's get the true story as to what the real future for that university should be.

Le Vice-Président : Ceci complète la période de temps pour les déclarations des députés.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

TECHNOLOGY FUND

Hon Mr Kwinter: On behalf of my ministry, I would like to inform the House that the Premier's Council technology fund is financing an important medical project by the Ottawa Heart Institute. As my colleague the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) has noted, we must use new medical technology as one of the tools to help us achieve a healthier Ontario.

The technology fund is contributing \$2.8 million over five years towards the project, which is worth \$22.3 million. The project focuses on the development of an electrohydraulic ventricular assist device, or EVAD, a device for implantation into people who suffer from heart disease. The device will help establish normal blood pressure levels. The project is considered the first stage in the development of a totally artificial heart that does not require the patient to be hooked up to equipment.

Dr Keon of the Ottawa Heart Institute is heading the research team, which also includes scientists from the University of Utah, the University of Ottawa's electrochemical science and technology centre and faculty of engineering and the National Research Council of Canada as well as Canadian and international industrial partners.

The search for a method to augment or replace the pumping action of the human heart has been going on for decades, but the process has been slowed down by problems related to infection and other side-effects. The EVAD project brings

together the necessary talent to bring about this much-needed medical innovation.

Ontario's contribution to this project represents an investment in the Canadian biomedical industry, a \$1.3-billion market. Of this spending, 90 per cent goes to imports. The EVAD project is an opportunity to produce in Ontario the medical equipment we need. The project will also create potential spinoff markets as a result of the electromechanical expertise that will be gained. Opportunities exist in the areas of chemotherapy infusion pumps and drug delivery systems as well as nonmedical applications, such as very small, high-reliability, rechargeable batteries.

The Premier's Council's contribution to this project through the technology fund fits into Ontario's long-term strategies for economic development. A vital component of these strategies is the need to focus on research and technological advancement as a way of increasing our global competitiveness.

The Deputy Speaker: Any other ministerial statements? If not, la réponse de l'opposition. Le député de Sault-Sainte-Marie.

RESPONSES

TECHNOLOGY FUND

Mr Morin-Strom: As the critic for Industry, Trade and Technology, I would in general like to commend the minister on this initiative. It is one that appears certainly to be worth while. Medical research is an area in which Ontario should have a much greater presence. We know of the escalating costs of health care and the fact that so much of that health care is going into new equipment. Many of those funds are going out of the province in order to purchase that equipment and bring it in for the service of our health care professions in Ontario.

I think it is about time we made major new initiatives in the area of health services in terms of the development of technologies here in Ontario. Initiatives like this hopefully will spur an industry which not only will allow us to supply our doctors and hospitals with the equipment we need for the residents of Ontario but will enable us to get into the production of new medical technology and the supply of that technology to other countries and other provinces. I look forward to reviewing this proposal in greater detail and thank the minister for his announcement.

Mr Eves: It is my pleasure to respond to the statement made by the minister in the House this afternoon. It is a welcome announcement by the

ministry. However, on this side of the House we have to view these announcements with some sort of cynicism, in view of the fact that the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) has said in this House on numerous occasions that one of the reasons we have longer waiting lists for heart surgery in Ontario and one of the reasons the waiting time is 200 per cent longer than it was in 1985 when they assumed power is because of rapid advances in medical technology: they cannot keep up.

We applaud these advances in medical technology, we applaud the fact that it is being done here, but the minister is going to use this as just another excuse for why the waiting lists are growing longer and longer and the time is longer and longer. It also just happens to be a coincidence, I suppose—this technology fund has been in place since 1985—that the Premier (Mr Peterson) is going to be at the Ottawa Heart Institute on Thursday. Talk about self-serving political hay out of what should be a serious announcement: here it is.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Sterling: I would like to say that I am pleased the government is recognizing Dr Keon, who happens to be a constituent of mine, for his contribution to medicine and to the whole area of heart research. I know my colleague's feeling with regard to the whole matter and the fact that access to heart operations is becoming more and more of a problem.

However, on the other hand, Dr Keon and his efforts deserve to be rewarded, and I am happy to see this announcement, effectively giving support to a constituent of an opposition riding.

1350

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. Other statements?

Sinon, ceci complète la période des déclarations ministérielles et des réponses de l'opposition.

Oral questions.

LANGUAGE OF DEBATE

LANGUES UTILISÉES DANS LES DÉBATS

Mr Cousens: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I appreciate that there is a large movement towards recognition of all languages and heritages in the province but I question the position the Speaker is taking. I mean there are many people who are watching this. Are we becoming a total—

Hon Mr Sorbara: You're not serious.

Mr Cousens: I am serious. I thought that this was primarily an English-speaking province and I am just—

Mr B. Rae: That is completely outrageous.

Mr Cousens: The member can call it outrageous. I am just saying, what is the precedent for it on an ongoing basis?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The government House leader.

Hon Mr Conway: I just want to say, Mr Speaker, while having great personal regard for my colleague the member for Markham (Mr Cousens), speaking on behalf of the government, we are absolutely delighted at the position that you have taken. This Legislature recognizes quite properly two official languages.

As I said to you earlier today, Mr Speaker, I have been particularly pleased by the way in which you have been conducting yourself here over the last few days by introducing French as the first language on a number of occasions. Speaking from the government's point of view, we are absolutely in support of that, because it recognizes a central reality of this country.

M. B. Rae : Monsieur le Président, c'est avec un sens, je dirais même — Je ne comprends pas, franchement, comment, à cette époque de l'histoire de notre pays et de notre province, il est possible qu'un député conservateur puisse dire au président de la Chambre qu'il ne peut pas parler français.

Moi, je vous félicite, monsieur le Président, d'avoir parlé votre langue maternelle. Je veux dire, au nom de mon parti, que nous vous appuyons, ainsi que tous les députés qui veulent s'exprimer dans leur langue maternelle, une des langues officielles du Canada.

Le député qui vient de parler devrait avoir honte de la position qu'il a prise dans cette Chambre.

Mr Cousens: Mr Speaker, I would like to apologize to you and to anyone else who misunderstands my point and I—

Interjections.

Mr Cousens: Please, I think I have offended honourable members of this House and I would like to just be very clear that I have the highest regard and respect for you, Mr Speaker, and all francophones in Canada and Ontario.

Interjections.

Mr Cousens: Please, I gave full attention to other members when they were speaking, including the member of the opposition.

I would like to say that I withdraw my point inasmuch as I have a sensitivity that is maybe just very much my own that says—

Hon R. F. Nixon: Call it prejudice.

Mr Cousens: Excuse me. The honourable Treasurer calls it prejudice. If it is prejudice, I again would like to stand up before this House and all people of Ontario and say I hope it is not prejudice. What I see happening in this fair province of ours—I want to make sure that we respect all cultures, all nationalities and all peoples. I have a sense that there is a movement towards making Ontario an officially bilingual province and—

Hon R. F. Nixon: This is a speech.

Mr Cousens: Excuse me. That is the basis upon which my concern was expressed, and therefore I respect the fact that the honourable Speaker, in the spirit of good communication, is trying to do it. I just sit and watch. I hope that Ontario continues to have respect for all nationalities and all peoples, English and French.

Interjections.

Mr Cousens: No, but I am not being—I am finding the outbursts from other members saying that I am a bigot or I am prejudiced or other things, and that is not the spirit in which I said it, because even yesterday in my own riding, we had a group of students from Strasbourg, France—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Are you still addressing a point of order?

Mr Cousens: I am saying I spoke in French and I was pleased to welcome them, promoting the spirit of friendship. I have some concerns that, in fact, there is a movement that is going to take Ontario into an official bilingual position and I just hope that there would be some discussion about it in this House and it would be considered more seriously. So I withdraw my concern about your statement.

The Deputy Speaker: May I remind the members that the standing orders allow all members of the House to speak in English and French. For those of you, including the people from the public gallery and the media, who have difficulty understanding one or the other, there are simultaneous interpretation and translation devices available to everybody in the House. I mean no offence and I thank the members for their support.

ORAL QUESTIONS

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Mr B. Rae: I have a question for the Premier today. On Friday, 5 May, the Globe and Mail

quotes his Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons (Mr Mancini)—the minister is not in the House—as follows: “Mr Mancini ruled out any prospect for employment equity legislation as a means of improving the situation.” He was referring, of course, to the very serious problems of unemployment that face members of the disabled community.

I wonder if the Premier can tell us how he squares that statement that there would be no legislation from the Ontario government with respect to employment equity with the commitment that the Premier personally made to me before he was Premier, which is contained in the accord which we signed this month four years ago, where he stated very clearly on behalf of the Liberal Party that it was in fact committed to mandatory affirmative action in the private and public sectors and that that involved passing laws to that effect.

Hon Mr Peterson: The government has undertaken a number of steps in that regard, which my honourable friend will be aware of. I was not aware of the comments of my colleague in the cabinet but I can tell you that we have taken a number of steps in the public sector and we will continue in that regard.

Mr B. Rae: There is a book about the civil service which is called *When in Doubt, Mumble*. Whenever I watch the Premier in action, I always know we have hit something of a payload when he starts to mumble as badly as he just did.

I wonder if he could tell us today or simply try to answer the question. The Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) is laughing so hard, he has turned around. I wonder if the Premier—

Hon R. F. Nixon: My colleague said obviously you are never in doubt.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Your colleague is perceptive.

Mr B. Rae: I want to ask the Premier if he could tell us quite simply this: Is the government planning to introduce a law regarding employment equity or not?

Hon Mr Peterson: I can tell my honourable friend that these matters are always under review. We started in the public sector, as I told my honourable friend, and we have made considerable progress in that regard.

Mr B. Rae: I have a copy of a cabinet document, dated 8 December and 30 December 1988. It is a cabinet submission with regard to the question of employment equity. It is a devastating indictment of the failure of the current program.

It outlines the fact that the Liberals are on record back in 1985 in their accord with the New Democrats, in the 1986 throne speech and in a race relations policy statement—it says that the government's commitment, which has not been matched to date by any action, is a political embarrassment and it states that the approach so far endorsed by the government, which the Premier repeated again today, is "ineffective, results in limited progress and in minimal gains."

It is obvious from the statement made by the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons—which the Premier did not deny or refute when I gave him an opportunity to do so in answer to the first question—that the government has rejected the recommendation of the Minister of Citizenship (Mr Phillips) with respect to employment equity and that it plans no such legislation as recommended specifically in the cabinet document which I have.

Can the Premier tell us why he has rejected the recommendations made to him with regard to a legislated program and why he continues to dither when the evidence, even in his own cabinet document, is simply overwhelming that the current system is not working and that the price for discrimination is being paid by women, by the disabled, by visible minorities and by our native people right across the province?

Hon Mr Peterson: I cannot comment on some cabinet submission my honourable friend has or may think is accurate; it may not be. There are many cabinet documents floating around. The member from time to time comes into possession of them and that is fine. That is no problem to me. Let me tell the member that we have, in our view, made progress in this regard. We will continue to honour our commitments and I think my honourable friend can rest assured that that is the case.

1400

CONTAMINATED FUEL

Mr B. Rae: Another question to the Premier, this time in the absence of the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley), known affectionately now to all and sundry as Bingo Bradley. Apparently Bingo was aware for several months of the fact that tainted fuel was being sold widely in this province—when I say tainted, I mean effectively poisoned with polychlorinated biphenyls and other hazardous wastes—and that this has been under investigation for several months, according to the statements that the minister made outside the House yesterday.

I want to ask the Premier how he squares that statement by his own minister with his government's obligation to the public health of the people of this province. Is he not in fact telling us that this government has known for months that drivers have been filling their tanks with poisoned fuel, that people have been exposed to this stuff for months on end and that his government did not have the courage and decency to tell either the federal government, according to the federal minister, or more important, the people of this province with regard to a major public health problem?

Hon Mr Peterson: I think my honourable friend will recognize that our Minister of the Environment has been very proactive in these matters. I think that he will recognize that the minister has moved and promised tough enforcement in this regard and is carrying through. He is, I am told, in Ottawa today discussing this matter and others with the federal Minister of the Environment because there is a question of shared jurisdiction. I think the member can rest assured that he is on top of this matter and doing everything that can be done.

Mr B. Rae: Perhaps I can ask the Premier then: When did he discover that there were in fact tainted fuels being sold in Ontario? Can he tell us that?

Hon Mr Peterson: I have no knowledge other than what I read of tainted fuels being sold.

Mr B. Rae: So the minister never told the Premier, the minister never told the cabinet, he never told the federal Minister of the Environment who reported yesterday in the House of Commons that he was not aware of anything until he read about it in the newspaper, and he never told the people of Ontario. He never told one single citizen that he has been aware for months of an investigation affecting the public health of the people of this province.

Again I put my question to the Premier: Does he not think the minister owed it to the people of this province to tell them that there was poisoned fuel being sold at pumps right across this province and that their health was at risk because of what was going on? Does the Premier not think he owed that to the people of Ontario?

Hon Mr Peterson: I cannot speak to what level of knowledge was held by the minister or by the people in the ministry.

Mr B. Rae: You heard yesterday.

Hon Mr Peterson: I heard it yesterday and the member heard it yesterday.

Mr B. Rae: That is right. What are you going to do about it?

Hon Mr Peterson: I can ask my honourable friend, if he knew all about it, why he did not stand up in this House and mention it six weeks ago or six months ago.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Hon Mr Peterson: I say to the member that the minister is on top of the situation. I think the member can rest assured of that.

Mr Brandt: My question on the same subject is to the Solicitor General. I understand that the minister stated this morning that the Ontario Provincial Police have been involved in the investigation of toxic fuel that was transported from New York state and sold in Ontario.

The minister would also be aware that a meeting was held in Oshawa on 20 April of this year between federal and provincial revenue officials. The purpose of that particular meeting was to continue co-operative efforts to uncover and to prosecute actions in the petroleum industry with respect to the transportation of these fuels across the border.

Can the minister assure this House that at that particular meeting, which was held with the federal government, the question of the transportation of illegal toxic chemicals being blended with fuel oils was in fact discussed, as well as the issue of the lost revenue, which we understand amounts to some \$100 million annually? Can the minister advise the House of that, please?

Hon Mrs Smith: The member for Sarnia was misinformed if he was informed that I stated we were involved in the investigation of the present tainted fuel. The investigation which the member referred to laterally in his question was raised at the time of the Provincial Auditor's report, the question of fuels going back and forth across the border without appropriate taxes being paid. This is in truth being investigated and that investigation is ongoing.

As far as the present situation is concerned, the OPP have made themselves available to the Ministry of the Environment, but as of my last checking on the matter, the Ministry of the Environment was conducting its own investigation without the assistance of the OPP.

Mr Brandt: I am advised that the minister is involving the OPP in the investigation. Through a discussion I held with federal officials this morning, I have been advised by them that at no time were they told by the province of Ontario, either by the OPP or by the Ministry of the

Environment, that there was a traffic that was occurring with respect to the shipment of toxic fuel.

The federal customs officials, who do come under the OPP investigation as it relates to revenue, were also not informed, to the best of my knowledge. The federal Minister of the Environment stood up in the House yesterday and indicated that he was totally unaware of the fact that these toxic contaminated fuels were being shipped from the United States into Canada.

Given those facts and given the fact that the minister is responsible for the OPP, which has been involved at least peripherally in some of these questions, why would her government choose to wait until today, according to the Premier, when his Minister of the Environment is now consulting with Environment Canada? Why would she not have exchanged this information in any way, even as it relates to revenue losses that are occurring if not the toxic contaminant problem we are getting to, with the federal officials? Why is there not more of a co-operative undertaking between the two levels of government in a matter this serious?

Hon Mrs Smith: The member for Sarnia constantly through his question mixes in the investigation of revenue with the investigation of toxic materials. This must be confusing to the public. It certainly is not confusing to me, because I have a very clear distinction in my mind between the two investigations.

One has to do with provincial revenue and is being carried on in an ongoing way by the OPP. We would be glad to share the information with anybody who wants it; that is ongoing. Of course, investigations themselves are carried on appropriately by the police in a confidential way. As for the toxic matter, it is a completely separate matter and the OPP have not been involved.

Mr Brandt: Some months ago, the Minister of the Environment indicated, he was aware of the illegal shipment of these blended fuels containing toxic contaminants. I am in fact putting together the question of revenue as well as the shipment of these toxic contaminants, because they may well involve the self-same transporters of these goods.

It would only appear to be logical that if in fact these same individuals are shipping this material into Canada and evading certain taxes, which heaven only knows our Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) needs so badly, it would follow that the minister's OPP investigating unit, which is dealing with the question of revenue, would put

together the issue of the toxic contaminant transportation with the Minister of the Environment and share this information with their federal colleagues so that they too can be aware of the severity of this particular problem.

Why would the minister not at least advise the RCMP or why would she not involve any of the federal authorities in connection with the direct and very specific responsibilities of the OPP in connection with this case?

Hon Mrs Smith: I would repeat that the OPP were investigating a revenue matter and they had not made any connection between this and any other matter. It may well be that as this new investigation gets under way, they will look to see if there is any overlap in persons or in dealers. Since they were looking into one matter and did not know the other existed, how could they be reporting on the other to anybody? They were not looking at the other and had not discovered toxic matters. The reporting of it would remain—the OPP were not aware, as they investigated the revenue matter, of any further problem. They were investigating a revenue matter and dealing with it at that level. What happens from here on in remains to be seen.

1410

ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Mrs Marland: My question is to the Minister of Citizenship.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission is presently under a very dark cloud, a position I hope the minister does not want to continue. Just yesterday, further allegations reported to my staff revealed Mr Schreiter, the director of compliance and investigation for Ontario at the commission, was flown to Toronto three times from the Yukon for job interviews at the expense of the commission, given the job and then had relocation expenses paid. All this was done while other qualified, visible-minority-group applicants in Ontario were rejected.

The minister admitted yesterday that Mr Anand was the only minority-group member in a management position. Will the minister admit today that both funds and hiring practices have been suspect at the commission over the past few years?

Hon Mr Phillips: I think we must remember the Ontario Human Rights Commission is embarking on some substantial change, designed to make it a more effective human rights commission. In the last week, we have added, I think, \$3 million worth of resources. The commission is following the consultants' reports

we had prepared about a year and a half ago, all designed to help to make it more effective.

In terms of looking at the staffing of the commission, as I think the member knows there are throughout the commission roughly 40 per cent women at each level and roughly 25 per cent from the visible minority community. In terms of the seven people who were recruited most recently, they are all qualified individuals, extremely competent, and the process that was followed in the recruiting, I am told, followed the public service guidelines.

I am satisfied on two fronts. One is that our chief commissioner is moving to substantially improve and enhance the commission's ability to carry out the enforcement of our code. I am also satisfied the commissioner has recruited good people. He has followed the procedures that have been outlined by the government. In that respect, on both of those counts, I am satisfied.

Mrs Marland: The people in the minority groups are not satisfied. When the minister says the commission has been under substantial change, he is right, but it is not a change in the direction of which I would be proud as minister.

Given the fact there is some real evidence and there are questions being asked about the suspect hiring practices and financial dealings of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, will the minister agree to a review by the standing committee on public accounts, on a priority basis, to deal immediately with this very serious matter?

Hon Mr Phillips: The chief commissioner—and, incidentally, an individual whom, when his appointment was announced, I think all three parties strongly supported, because of his exceptional record in this area—has made it known on many occasions that he would be happy, indeed he would welcome an opportunity, to meet with the appropriate committee of the Legislature to review what is happening at the commission, to review its priorities, to review its plans. He has made this point in the past. I am sure the chief commissioner, if the appropriate committee of the Legislature wanted to have him appear before the committee, to review what is going on at the commission, review its priorities and policies, would welcome that opportunity, as he has in the past.

Mrs Marland: That is really encouraging, because if the commissioner has offered that opportunity, then I would assume the member, as the minister, would be totally in agreement with the public accounts committee reviewing the Ontario Human Rights Commission immediately

on a priority basis. That is the only answer I can extract from the minister's reply and that is encouraging.

As a further supplementary, I want to ask the minister, if the commission must be a flagship in terms of hiring practices in every possible, equitable way for visible minorities in the province, would the minister agree that the commission must not only protect those minorities from discrimination in workplaces throughout Ontario, but also must ensure that its public practices are impeccable in terms of government organizations?

The minister has said he is satisfied in terms of their existing practices, but if the perception out there is that there is something to be questioned, then is it good enough for him that the public has lost confidence in the commission and that minority group leaders are calling for this investigation? Because it is his own ministerial constituency, could we look to him for the direction and leadership to arrange immediately for that hearing to go before the public accounts committee?

Hon Mr Phillips: There are several questions there. I will repeat what I said earlier, and that is that the chief commissioner has said on several occasions that he would be happy to appear before the appropriate legislative committee. I think that it would be a matter of which is the appropriate committee, to be dealt with by the House leaders.

I think it is a big mistake, frankly, to prejudge the commission and its practices. I am satisfied it followed sensible practices. I think as we look throughout the commission we see—and I repeat—at every level women strongly represented for good reason; at every level the visible community strongly represented for good reason.

The progress the commission is making is substantial. I repeat: The commissioner has said on many occasions that he would be happy to appear before the appropriate legislative committee. I think that is the process that should be followed. I repeat myself: I am satisfied that our commissioner is making good progress for ensuring that we have a substantially enhanced human rights commission.

Mrs Grier: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who, we were told, would be here today. Can I ask if he is expected back? If so, I will stand down.

Hon Mr Conway: The minister is here. He will be here shortly.

The Deputy Speaker: The minister for Scarborough West. I mean the member.

Mr R. F. Johnston: The minister for Scarborough West is probably as close as I will get to being a minister. I will accept that, Mr Speaker. I have a question for the Treasurer who never thought he would be Treasurer, so anything is possible.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr R. F. Johnston: In the Treasurer's list of sins in the federal budget, regarding education he has talked about the failure to transfer funds as we had expected them to be transferred under established programs financing, but he has not talked at all about the problems that those institutions, and boards of education as far as that goes, are going to suffer because of the rises in the unemployment insurance rates this year. I have heard from the University of Toronto that it is anticipating an extra cost to its budget of \$800,000 this year just for UIC increases, and that the Metropolitan Toronto School Board is estimating a \$3-million raise in its cost for UIC. Is the Treasurer willing at this stage to guarantee that they will not be stuck for those extra costs and that he will make sure the province provides if the federal government refuses?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I cannot make that guarantee, but I naturally have a good deal of sympathy, particularly in the case of the universities that do not have access to ready additional revenues on their own behest. Certainly when we are considering grants for a future year, matters like that would have to be taken in consideration, but I am not in a position at this stage to make additional payments for this purpose.

What other governments do by way of tax changes, really, we cannot always guard against. In this connection, as I am sure the member is aware, the government of Canada is contemplating a new sales tax, and how that would affect the various agencies and emanations of government or those responsibilities in the community that depend on government for most of their financing is very much a matter of concern to me.

Mr R. F. Johnston: It is also difficult to know just how a payroll tax might affect these institutions in terms of extra burden. I wanted to let the minister know that I have heard from the York Region Board of Education that it anticipates its costs this year would go up an extra \$600,000. This would cause them to raise the mill rate; to raise this kind of money, they have to do it by one half of one per cent.

Does the Treasurer have any idea at this stage of the extent of the problem? Has his ministry investigated the kind of costs that are now going

to be put on to these provincial institutions, causing them burdens which may affect the delivery of program and other kinds of decisions?

1420

Hon R. F. Nixon: The estimate of the costs has not been given to me in specific dollars, but we know in general what the additional responsibility is, since the government of Canada has said that for unemployment insurance the costs must be entirely borne by employers and employees, and that the government of Canada will make no contribution at all. So in essence it is sort of like a payroll tax in that it is based on the size of the payroll, with both employers and employees contributing.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Mr Brandt: My question is to the Premier. I had intended to ask this question of the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley). However, in his absence, since he is belatedly sharing with the federal government his awareness of the shipment of illegal toxic fuels from the United States and because this question has some emergency related to it, I will ask the question of the Premier.

Tonight there is a meeting in Pickering with respect to the matter of the greater Toronto area's proposing Pickering as a potential site for municipal waste from the GTA municipalities. There is some concern on their behalf that this government may attempt to bypass its own environmental protection legislation by moving to the Environmental Protection Act, as opposed to a full-fledged and complete environmental assessment, with respect to any proposed new site.

Since this meeting is being held this evening and since these particular constituents are extremely concerned about what this government may do relative to a proposed landfill site, can the Premier give the assurance to this House, and therefore to the people of the Pickering area, that any new site will, in fact, require that the full Environmental Assessment Act be applied to that proposed site?

Hon Mr Peterson: The Minister of the Environment answered that question, I think, two or three weeks ago. My answer is the very same as his. That is the answer.

Mr Brandt: This is going to look particularly revealing to the people of Pickering who, when looking very carefully at the answer of the Minister of the Environment, will have extreme difficulty in interpreting the convoluted way in

which he said, "Perhaps, maybe, but I'm not sure." That is about the answer that we got.

We are talking about millions of tons of municipal waste that are going to be disposed of, on an annual basis, for some long number of years in some proposed site. In the GTA document that was, in fact, accepted by those municipalities, there was a small and sometimes overlooked caveat in that particular document which stated very clearly that in the case of an "emergency," there may be some necessity to bypass the normal environmental approval process which is the Environmental Assessment Act.

With due respect, I ask very specifically—that is all I want to know—is this government prepared to require that the Environmental Assessment Act be applied to a new site, or conversely is it prepared to say it is going to go to some other watered-down version, such as the Environmental Protection Act? What is this government going to do? Will the Premier give us a straight answer, please.

Hon Mr Peterson: Members have the straight answer, they got it from the minister two or three weeks ago. We all understand it on this side of the House. My honourable friend cannot understand it. I can tell him that it washes completely. My honourable friend should know that it is the view of the government that the fullest, most stringent environmental principles will attach to any hearing.

MOBILE HOME PARK

Mr Owen: I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Church's mobile home park in Barrie consists of 65 mobile homes which are owned by the occupants, but they lease the land on which they are located. The owner, Mr Church, is now nearly 90 years of age and has decided he is going to sell the land. Some 40 years ago when he first developed the property it was on the outskirts of Barrie, but now it is completely surrounded by a developed city environment.

Of course he is entitled to sell his property, but we find that the people who are living there and who own their homes in some cases have their complete investment of a lifetime invested in those homes. They are facing the prospect of having to move off this land and they do not know where they are going to go.

I am wondering if the minister can offer any hope or protection to these people who are caught in this unfortunate predicament.

Hon Mr Wrye: The honourable member and I have had an exchange in this House before on this issue, which I know is affecting a number of his constituents in more than one mobile home park, and he has raised that privately with me on a number of occasions as well.

I can tell the honourable member that as the laws now exist, the home owners can protect their interest, in the situation where Mr Church might sell his property, by registering their lease at a land registry office. That would, of course, protect them only for the term of their lease.

If that is long term, obviously that would put them in a fairly good situation for the years to come. I am sympathetic to the honourable member's problem and to the fact he has raised it with a number of local municipalities.

Mr Owen: The leases involved are all short-term leases, unfortunately for the people who are occupying them. I have taken it upon myself to contact other ministries of this government. I have contacted umpteen municipalities, including Barrie, Innisfil, West Gwillimbury, Vespra, Essa, Sunnidale, Oro and on, trying to find out if there was some way in which the more rural areas would be able to accommodate the needs of these people.

What concerns me is the needs of these people, but also the needs of other people who are going to be facing this across the province, because what we are facing in Barrie is going to be duplicated many times across Ontario in the near future.

I am wondering if the minister can suggest if there is any protection to the future problems of the people in these types of home settings that can be accommodating to their dilemma and maybe avoid a similar fate or future.

Hon Mr Wrye: I cannot help. It is regrettable that the leases in the Church's home park situation are short-term leases. I cannot suggest any further solution to the honourable member for that immediate situation, other than the one that I have. I certainly appreciate that he has been attempting to bring the municipalities together to see if they can work out some solution. I would certainly encourage him to continue along that line as really being the only other alternative.

In the longer term, we are currently looking at a number of options as we review the Condominium Act, and we have been having discussions with the Minister of Housing (Ms Hošek). We are looking at a number of current land development methods and seeing if we can develop alternatives and options which we will be able to put in place to—

Mr Runciman: He is putting us all to sleep, Mr Speaker.

Hon Mr Wrye: I am sorry that my friend the member for Leeds-Grenville (Mr Runciman) is not interested in this question. It is a very important question in the Barrie area. I would have thought he would allow my colleague a chance to ask his questions in the House—

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Wrye: If I might conclude briefly: As we review the Condominium Act, I am hopeful that we will be able to bring forward a number of alternatives to the kind of traditional proposals which will allow this kind of problem and others to be solved in the future.

TRANSIT SERVICES

Mr Mackenzie: In the absence of the Minister of Transportation (Mr Fulton), I have a question for the Treasurer of the province.

His colleague, the Minister of Transportation, has sent a letter to the regional chairman in Hamilton-Wentworth in just recent days, which has caused some concern. In one of the paragraphs in the letter, one sentence says: "With the current situation, there does not appear to be justification to apply a preferential 90 per cent subsidy to trolley expenditures."

Why would this government and the minister discriminate against Hamilton by clearly threatening to renege on the 90 per cent subsidy for electrically propelled transit while all electrically propelled transit in the city of Toronto is subsidized at the 90 per cent rate?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I certainly agree with the honourable member that we ought to be treating municipalities in a fair and equitable manner. I do not know any justification for not doing so, but if my colleague has said so I will certainly discuss it with him, because probably there is good reason; he is a very fair and equitable person. The fact that the honourable member has raised it here in his absence really means that all I can say in response to the question is that I will speak to him about it.

1430

Mr Allen: Hamilton has good reason to be concerned because it has proceeded with costly expenditures to its transit system based on that preferred subsidy rate and based on proceeding with trolley buses as a major solution to the transportation problem. Why would the minister, in the Treasurer's opinion, reverse that direction, considering the environmental issues concerned,

when considerable cost would be attached to Hamilton by reducing the subsidy?

As a matter almost of separate concern, the minister appears to be manipulating Hamilton, our city, by using cost figures derived from an attempt by Daytona to scuttle a trolley bus system by ordering dual-service vehicles that would cost half a million dollars, which the minister now is citing as a normal cost for a trolley bus system. Does the Treasurer agree with those tactics?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I do not know anything about what the honourable member is talking about. I know the honourable member my colleague the minister is very knowledgeable on this matter. But speaking for me, whenever the province is in a program where it is subsidizing 90 per cent of a service for Hamilton, it might possibly be that it should be looked at. That is pretty rich.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. It is the members' time for question period.

LOT LEVIES

Mr Harris: To the Treasurer: Yesterday I asked the Minister of Housing (Ms Hošek) if her ministry, being responsible for housing in the province, had done any impact studies on the impact of lot levies and other provincial taxes on the cost of affordable housing in Ontario. I was a little astounded that the Minister of Housing had not done any impact studies and washed her hands of the whole matter.

But she did make a suggestion, and that suggestion was that I should ask the Treasurer. I am taking the minister up on that suggestion, and at the risk of asking the inmate to run the prison, I ask the Treasurer whether in fact he has done any impact studies of the effect on the affordable housing question in this province of the imposition of the new lot levies he is proposing?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I think the government has been well informed about that impact. The honourable member would know we tabled a green paper with a number of proposed policy alternatives. I believe that was in December. Since that time, my colleague the honourable member for York East (Ms Hart) has chaired a committee of parliamentary assistants. I have met a number of groups from the community as well as other ministers directly concerned. We have heard the views of members of the homebuilders' association who very properly are deeply concerned about the high price of housing in Ontario, and who in recent years have regularly expressed their concern in that regard.

Among other things, they have brought clearly to our attention what they consider to be the impact of lot levies on those prices.

It is necessary, as I am sure the honourable member would know, that we balance the information that comes directly from the home builders and those who sell the homes with the necessity of having adequate capital to provide schools in the rapidly expanding communities, particularly around Toronto and in some other centres. That is the information upon which we are contemplating the possibility of moving towards lot levies.

Mr Harris: I appreciate the Treasurer does need new money. After all, he is dealing with a Premier (Mr Peterson) and a cabinet that are increasing spending in this province the likes of which we have not seen since Pierre Trudeau hit the federal scene. I appreciate that, but I want to—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Harris: The Treasurer indicates he is going to sell the new Nipissing courthouse. I do not put it past the Treasurer. I do not think anything is free from being studied by this Treasurer.

The industry has indicated that for every \$100 million in lot levies he is going to bring in, he will impact on housing somewhere in the order of \$5 billion to \$6 billion, the affordability of the existing stock included. That has been the industry study, but the Treasurer in his answer said he feels that study may be somewhat biased from its point of view.

I ask the Treasurer this: Has he or his government—I am astounded the Ministry of Housing has not—has he as Treasurer or the Ministry of Revenue done any impact studies on increasing taxation in this area; and if he has not, why not?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member prefaced his question by saying I obviously need more money for school capital. I am not sure that is correct. The honourable member knows that in the last year he was in government, and that was just four years ago, school capital was under \$80 million for the whole of the province; about \$74 million. We have raised this to \$300 million each year, and in fact the additional capital is needed by the communities which under our statutes have the responsibility to provide for school-building accommodation.

We are providing \$300 million and we are providing, at least in our policy paper proposals, for alternatives of beyond just the mill rate to pay

for the local share. We think it is appropriate that this flexibility might very well be considered to assist rapidly growing communities.

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Mr Dietsch: I have a question for the minister responsible for women's issues. On 2 May, the minister announced an additional \$5.4 million for wife assault prevention programs to maintain safety and protect the quality of life. The new allocation of funding, with the cost-of-living increase of \$500,000, brings the commitment for wife assault to \$40 million, a 17 per cent increase over 1988, yet some have responded that shelter beds in the province are still 700. A number suggest this has had no increase since 1985.

There seems to be a great deal of confusion and I would like the minister to alleviate that confusion. Has there been an increase in shelter beds available to the victims of family violence since 1985 or not?

Hon Mr Sorbara: I appreciate the question from my friend the member for St Catharines-Brock, particularly because, as he suggested in the prelude to the question, there were some people in the Legislature—

Mr B. Rae: Why are you looking down at the answer? Look up. Don't look at the answer.

Hon Mr Sorbara: There were some people, I tell the Leader of the Opposition who does not want to hear the answer—I invite him to do so—who had been suggesting that the number of shelter beds in the province had remained at some 700. The fact is that there are now some 1,290 beds operating within some 79 shelters in the province and there has been an increase of over 100 new beds in the province during the past four years.

Probably even more important than that, the funding he refers to has stabilized a movement that is so very vital to women who are subject to threats of, or who are the victims of, violence within a domestic context.

Mr Dietsch: My supplementary is about some of the minister's specific initiatives. He has referred to a study dealing with violence against women with disabilities, as well as making shelters more accessible for women with disabilities. I am concerned: Will these initiatives benefit those women most affected by this problem of family violence?

1440

Hon Mr Sorbara: My friend refers to an allocation that was made during the course of those announcements of \$50,000, accompanied

with matching funds of some \$50,000, for a study of the particular needs of women with disabilities who are the victims of domestic violence. It is crucial that we get on with that study for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is that women with disabilities are often at a further disadvantage. They are doubly disadvantaged in that context.

We do not have a good sense of what services ought to be provided and how shelters ought to respond to the particular needs of women with disabilities. This study, with the full support of DAWN, which is the Dis-Abled Women's Network, in Ontario, will begin to show us the way we should be moving to respond to women in those particular situations.

FINE OPTIONS

Mr Farnan: To the Minister of Correctional Services: Our prisons are overcrowded. We have double-bunking and triple-bunking. We have relocations of inmates considerable distances from their homes.

At the same time, the ministry has had two small fine options projects, in Hamilton and Niagara, for the past several years. Little wonder that members of the bench are refusing to incarcerate individuals for nonpayment of fines, as Ontario continues to fail to provide a broadly based fine options program to pay off one's fine through community service.

My question is, when will the minister end the façade and recognize that after several years he cannot hide behind two small fine options programs in Hamilton and Niagara? When will he end the discrimination by extending this program across the entire province?

Hon Mr Ramsay: I would like to thank the member for the question because I agree with him that the fine options programs we have had operating in the Niagara Peninsula as pilots have been very successful. I will be making some announcements very soon about expansion of those programs.

Mr Farnan: This has been going on for many years. Provincial Court Judge John Smith has criticized the government, saying it is using the court system as a collection agency to wring money from those who can least afford it. In refusing to incarcerate an individual for nonpayment of a fine, Judge John Smith, in his judgement on a recent case, said:

"The fine options program cannot be done in Ontario because our government will not fund it. The politicians appear not to care. I have been hammering this thing, trying to get the govern-

ment, for years, to make the law equal for the rich and the poor."

How does the minister respond to Judge Smith, and to Donald Page, one of his own Correctional Services officials, who said, "The main problem is we have not got final approval and we have not got funding"? Is it not about time? Is this not too late?

Hon Mr Ramsay: I would have thought the member would have been satisfied with my initial response that I was going to respond to his demand. I am a minister and we have a ministry that does care. I think community service orders, restitution and other sanctions like that are more appropriate than incarceration in lieu of payment of fines. As I said before, we will be responding in the near future.

EMPLOYMENT ADJUSTMENT

Mrs Cunningham: My question is for the Minister of Skills Development. The federal government announced in its budget of February 1986 that it planned to make available to the provinces a joint program to assist older workers affected by major, permanent layoffs. The program for older worker adjustment calls on the federal government to pay 70 per cent of the assistance given to older workers aged 55 to 64, those people who have suffered a permanent job loss, have no prospects for re-employment and no realistic opportunities to go back to work.

Given the fact that the Premier's Council has urged an examination of "the subsequent economic fortunes of workers displaced by industry restructurings," will the minister please explain why his government is one of only two provinces that have not joined this particular program?

Hon Mr Curling: I was just about getting excited to answer the question, but the matter belongs to the Minister of Labour. I will ask the Minister of Labour to respond.

Mrs Cunningham: I knew you wouldn't be responsible for this, Alvin. I knew it wouldn't be your fault.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Hon Mr Sorbara: I wonder why the member for London North is shaking her finger at the Minister of Skills Development simply by virtue of the fact that he points out to my good friend that POWA happens to be within the jurisdiction of the Minister of Labour. Surely the member for London North, doing a little bit of research, would have known that. A simple phone call would have indicated to her that the appropriate

place to pose that question would be to the Minister of Labour.

I want to tell her the reason Ontario has not yet entered into a POWA agreement with the federal government. The answer is simple: It is that the federal government, in its wisdom, has changed the rules applicable to POWA on a variety of occasions.

It has recently announced changes that now make it of interest for Ontario to enter into negotiations. I would expect, if the federal government sticks to the position it has now adopted, that in the fullness of time, not very late in the future, we will have a POWA agreement to benefit older workers in this province.

Mrs Cunningham: I find it most interesting that the minister makes excuses for this particular provincial government. All we hear is moaning and how the feds do not help this government out. This program has been on the books since 1986. Eight other provinces figured out a way to join. Eight other provinces are helping out their older workers. I do not accept the answer.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The supplementary question is?

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Speaker, I do not have a supplementary question.

SOUTH MUSKOKA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Mr Black: My question is to the Minister of Health. She will be aware that South Muskoka Memorial Hospital has the opportunity to add a new medical specialty in obstetrics and gynaecology to the staff, and that the implementation of that service will require some additional funding from her ministry. That request has been made. Could the minister tell this House the status of the request at the present time?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I am aware of this situation and of the member's interest. It is important to note that the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) announced an 8.1 per cent transfer payment to the hospitals of this province. As the member knows, we are in the stage of developing a transitional funding formula. Our goal is to see that hospitals are fairly and appropriately funded for the services they provide. We know how important it is for hospitals to do appropriate manpower planning and establish their priorities within their global budget to meet the real and changing needs of their communities.

I said to the member when he discussed this with me that I would encourage the hospital to

meet with other hospitals in the area to discuss, on a regional basis, manpower planning and the opportunity to realize services, to meet the desire for a new program in the region.

Mr Black: If the minister is unable to announce the funding for this program today, I understand a request has been made that she meet with representatives of that hospital board. Can she tell us whether she will be holding such a meeting?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I would say to the member we recognize that not all hospitals can or should attempt to provide every specialty service and that planning on a regional basis is particularly important. I have said to the member that I would be pleased to meet with representatives of all the hospitals in the region and district health council members to discuss how they could proceed to plan appropriately for human resources on a regional basis, to meet the real and changing needs of the community within available resources within the region.

SHOAL LAKE WATER QUALITY

Mrs Grier: My question is for the Premier. The Premier, I am sure, is aware that the city of Winnipeg gets its drinking water from Shoal Lake in northwestern Ontario. Yesterday, Consolidated Professor Mines applied to the Ontario government for permission to develop a gold mine on Stevens Island in Shoal Lake. Today, the government of Manitoba has asked that all documentation associated with the application be forwarded to it, that it be given ample time to review the material, and in particular that there be public hearings on the proposal.

Can the Premier assure the people of Winnipeg that nothing will happen in that lake that might affect the quality of their drinking water without ample opportunity for public participation?

Hon Mr Peterson: May I say at the outset that I am very glad I stayed to receive this question. I appreciate my honourable friend telling me about this; I was not aware of this situation. I am sure we will work closely with the people of Winnipeg to make sure they have quality water, as we have very close relationships, as she knows, with that province and will continue to do so.

I cannot tell my honourable friend everything that is happening with respect to that particular application, but I can assure her that the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley) will handle that with the sensitivity and judgement with which he handles all matters of this type.

1450

Mr Hampton: I think we had ample evidence yesterday that hazardous materials and pollution do not respect boundaries; they do not respect international boundaries and they may not respect interprovincial boundaries.

What the people of Manitoba and the government of Manitoba are asking is something that I think is a very simple request. There is already a memorandum of understanding between Ontario and Manitoba to preserve the water quality of Shoal Lake. It is a memorandum that has been there for some time. All they are asking is that the government of Ontario share whatever information is available regarding this mining project and that public hearings be held.

Finally, I would ask the Premier to make one further commitment: that if we really care about the environment and we recognize that pollutants can move across boundaries, public hearings be held in Winnipeg so that those people can be assured that no water-quality damage will occur. Can he make those simple commitments?

Hon Mr Peterson: I think we all do understand, as my friend has said, that pollutants do not respect national or provincial boundaries. I do not think there is anything particularly profound in that particular observation.

I am not aware of any official request by the city of Winnipeg or the government of Manitoba with respect to the position my honourable friends have put forward. They may have asked the members to do something officially on their behalf, but they have not asked us. They may have had these discussions with the Minister of the Environment; I do not know. I will discuss it with the Minister of the Environment and we will obviously co-operate with our sister province in every way that is reasonable.

With respect to the question of having public hearings in another province, I am not sure I can give my honourable friend that commitment. I am not sure that is the appropriate thing to do in the circumstances. Obviously, however, we will respect our traditional friendships, and they will our very strong commitment to the environment.

So I will discuss it with the minister, and if there is anything we can do to improve the situation, obviously we will.

RETAIL SALES TAX

M. Villeneuve: En l'absence du ministre du Revenu (M. Grandmaître), j'aimerais adresser ma question au Trésorier.

Would the Treasurer remain in his seat? The Treasurer probably knows that Quebec does not

tax purchases of furniture for residential dwellings, which include big-ticket items such as kitchen and bedroom furniture, stoves, etc., nor are Ontario residents taxed for Quebec purchases.

From my riding up through Prescott and Russell, Ottawa, Vanier and up the valley, furniture and appliance stores have lost a great deal of business, because people can make identical purchases in Quebec for a lot less.

Does the minister have any estimate as to how many jobs and how much money this has cost the government of Ontario and our retailers in eastern Ontario?

Hon R. F. Nixon: No, but I do know that people who might otherwise go to la belle province for other purchases have to pay a full additional one per cent on those purchases in Quebec. Of course, they do have other taxes that balance it up in general. The fact that they do not tax furniture may be somewhat of a dislocation, as the honourable member indicated, but we do tax it in Ontario.

Mr Villeneuve: Stormont, Dundas and Glen-garry, Prescott and Russell, Vanier, all of the Ottawa ridings and up the valley are all subject to this and the retailers in that area are suffering a great deal. Even though Ontario residents are supposed to report their purchases in order to pay Ontario sales tax, we know that this hardly happens at all. The Quebec tax exemption has been in place for some time and has caused Ontario stores to lose a great deal of business.

Does the minister support proposals for a similar tax exemption in Ontario, or is he going to allow for fair competition for our Ontario retailers in that area?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I do not support the exemption, and I know that the retailers in that area have certain other obvious advantages in living in this jurisdiction which the honourable member would be aware of.

MINISTRY RELOCATION

Mr Campbell: I have a question for the Minister of Northern Development. Could the minister comment generally on how the relocation plans are going in northern Ontario?

Hon Mr Fontaine: I thank the member for the question. First, the relocation in general is going very well. Everything is on schedule. In my ministry, for the building in Sudbury—I guess the member knows where it is—as the member knows, the contract was given last fall and we anticipate that we shall occupy this building in July 1990. For the Ministry of Mines building,

the tender will be awarded in stages commencing 1 July 1989. Some 40 of my employees have already moved to the Vanguard building, and I will move another 10 to Timmins. Instead of leaving the regional office in Sudbury, I moved the regional office to Timmins.

PETITIONS

SCHOOL OPENING AND CLOSING EXERCISES

Mr Pollock: I have a petition, signed by 198 people, which reads as follows:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas we believe the amendment to regulation 262 relating to 'the collective recitation' of the Lord's Prayer in opening or closing exercises in public schools deprives many Ontario citizens of their established freedom, we therefore object to the loss of this freedom."

It is signed by myself.

The Deputy Speaker: May I call the members to order, please? There are many private conversations which make it very difficult to hear the petitions.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr Jackson: I wish to present a petition.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the government of Ontario as follows:

"We, the taxpayers of Halton, are alarmed that the government of Ontario continues to decrease its share of the cost of public school funding which is clearly contrary to the government's guarantee that Bill 30 would not be implemented at the expense of the public school system and which is contrary to its election promise to restore the previous contribution towards education to 60 per cent of the total cost.

"We call upon the Premier and the government of Ontario to take immediate action to address this situation and to honour the commitment to return to a 60 per cent level of government funding for public education."

The petition has my support and signature.

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION

Mr Jackson: I have a second petition.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We, the teachers in Simcoe county, wish to inform the Legislature of the concern that negotiations on pension matters within the biennial review between the Ontario government and the Ontario Teachers' Federation have been terminated.

"We submit to you our 2,049 signatures/letters in the fervent hope that the government of Ontario will return to the bargaining table forthwith until such time as a mutually agreeable solution is reached."

These letters are submitted. It has my signature and support.

TOBACCO TAX

Mr Wiseman: I have a petition signed by 857 constituents in the riding of Lanark-Renfrew. It reads:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Hold the line on tobacco tax in Ontario."

I have added my name to this petition; as a nonsmoker, too, I might say.

1500

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION

Mr Wiseman: I have a second petition signed by 100 constituents in the riding of Lanark-Renfrew which reads:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We urge you to amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that the teachers who retired prior to 31 May 1982 have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than the present seven or 10 years.

"This proposed amendment would make the five-year criteria applicable to all retired teachers and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

I have signed my name to this petition as well.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

MADAWASKA CLUB LIMITED ACT, 1989

Mr Black moved first reading of Bill Pr12, An Act respecting the Madawaska Club Ltd.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the amendment to the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Mr Owen: Yesterday I was about to comment on a visit I made to Innisdale Secondary School in Barrie about two weeks ago. At that time, I was asking the students why they were choosing to go on into professional careers and why they were choosing to go to university rather than go in the direction of trades and industry.

In a jocular manner, one of the boys in the class replied that he did not want to do that because he did not want to dirty his hands. He was being humorous and facetious, but at the same time he was identifying an attitudinal problem on the part of parents today in our province because so often the parents want their children to grow up to be doctors or lawyers or teachers, but they are reluctant to see them go on into trades and industry.

I would suggest that this is a problem which we have to address in this Legislature. The attitude is one of error on the part of so many of these parents. Today, industry and the trades offer exciting challenges. We are today in a time when we have rapidly changing machinery and skills have to be changed to accommodate these rapid changes. Today the trades afford very, very high incomes. There was a time, possibly, when industries paid the lower scale, but that is not the case any more. I feel we should get this message out to the public, to the parents and to the students that they should accept these challenges.

This, then, is a government which is trying to address the present and anticipated shortages of skilled workers. Unless we do that, we will not be able to meet the challenges of international trade.

The second direction which the throne speech indicated was that we would be looking at a purposeful and relevant education system and that this would be the key to realizing both the economic potential of our province and the individual potential of our people.

Along that line, we have seen the commitment of this province. We have, in fact, met the earlier commitment of smaller classes in grades 1 and 2. We have gone the direction and the route of increased computer education in the elementary as well as the secondary schools. We have

indicated that we will be working towards revitalizing the curriculum from grades 1 to 6 by focusing on the development of literacy and analytical and communications skills and we have indicated that we will resolve the issue of specialization, hopefully once and for all, and that we will be looking at specialization in the area of grades 10 to 12.

How are we going to pay for these new directions? This has been a question which has been raised in the Legislature by way of opposition. I would like to address a number of those things which are under consideration.

For example, one of the suggestions made in this Legislature is that we look at the pooling of industrial and commercial taxes.

Approximately two months ago, the director of our public school board in our county asked if he could sit down and talk to me about a number of problems. He and a number of his staff and some of his trustees came to the constituency office and they sat down and they said, "What are you trying to do with regard to the pooling of industrial and commercial taxes?"

I pointed out to them that while I have only sat in this Legislature but two years, I have been involved in provincial matters for in excess of 20 years. One of the concerns I have always heard about the provincial field is the inequities of funding of different boards in different parts of this province. That has been a criticism which has been there for decades and decades.

One of the suggestions which has been made to this government to address this problem is that if we pooled the industrial and the commercial taxes and then distributed them equally on a per capita basis of need across the province, we would be trying to tear down that inequality which exists.

For example, in Ontario we know that in the area of Markham we have very rich industries located there. We also know that the rich industries produce rich residences for the people who live in the houses in that area. We know that in certain areas of our province, whether it be in eastern Ontario or certain parts of the counties of Grey and Bruce, sometimes they have not had the same opportunities of raising resources for their children's education because they have not had the same industrial base.

This has been a proposal made to us, that we can finally address the inequality, and we have said, as I said to the director as he visited with me, "If you think that there's another solution to this problem which is better than this, then let's hear it and we will look at it, but if you cannot

think of another alternative or a better solution, then if this is possibly going to do the job, let's get on with it and try it."

I have not heard of any alternative proposal from that school board, and hopefully this might be the answer to trying to afford equal opportunities for quality education for all students of this province.

I have had the question raised of lot levies. A few weeks ago, the Greater Barrie Chamber of Commerce asked if I would attend a breakfast meeting with its members. There were the developers in our community and there were the lawyers for the developers from our community, and they said: "What are you trying to do? Lot levies will only increase the costs of a home."

I gave them the example I had used earlier with some others of a couple who in January 1988 put in an offer of \$190,000 on a home in Barrie. When the transaction was closing in June 1988, the same house plan in the same subdivision, with the same lot costs, the same costs of labour, because it had already been contracted, the same costs of materials, because they had already been contracted, the same house that this couple was paying \$190,000 for was selling for \$240,000.

1510

I said to the developers who were meeting at that breakfast: "When the house was originally contracted for sale in January the builder was making a good profit. He was then making another \$50,000 on the same house by the time the same house plan was being sold to others, a matter of four months later. What is determining the value of what you are seeking and asking for your house sales?"

One of the most successful developers in our community replied: "Supply and demand." I said: "That is correct. It is supply and demand. It used to be in Barrie, and still is throughout most of Ontario, that the builder figures out his costs and adds a little profit and he sells his house. But in the growth areas such as around Metro and Durham and Peel and in our part of Simcoe county, it is supply and demand."

I pointed out to them that if the school is not there, they do not have the demand and I pointed out that they would not think twice about the extra \$5,000 or whatever the school board might put on to that house to help pay for the school in that plan. I pointed out also that I was well aware that they would probably be selling the house saying they were going to be asking another \$5,000 of the purchaser, but that I knew and they knew that they did not have to ask for another

penny because they were already well looked after in their profits.

It was interesting that all of the developers and all of the lawyers for the developers backed off. I pointed out to them that we have had huge numbers of new millionaires in our community every year over the past several years and all of them through real estate. I do not begrudge them their millions. I do not begrudge them their success but I do say that they have to help pay their way with the needs of the communities. They have to help come up with the money towards the schools which are having to be built to meet the needs of the people to whom they are selling their homes.

So I am saying that as we are facing these problems of growth in certain areas of this province, we as a government must continuously come up with new and innovative ways of dealing with these demands and with these problems. I would submit that we are doing that with some of these proposals.

Another problem that has concerned me in education and I trust we will be facing and coming to grips with is that I see that in the lower grades, all through elementary school, the girls are probably involved in math and science to an even greater extent than are the boys. Yet somehow as soon as we reach grade 9 and certainly by grade 10, the girls start to drop the studies of math and science.

In our area, it would appear that while the girls make up probably 52 per cent of those studying math and science in elementary school, by the time we are into grades 10, 11 and 12, girls make up less than 40 per cent of those studying math and science. By doing this, by making these choices, the girls are in fact cheating themselves not only of educational opportunities but also of future job opportunities. Somehow we have to get this message through to the parents and through to these schools and to the students themselves that they are shortchanging themselves.

Just a matter of days ago, I was at a science fair for the county of Simcoe and I asked if those in charge of it would let me know of the numbers of those who were participating who were girls and who were boys. It turned out that the ones who were excelling and who had their exhibits in the final competition for the elementary school were mainly girls, but by the time we hit the competitions in the high school level suddenly it was about three or four to one for boys having their exhibits in this fair as opposed to girls. So I hope we will address this problem as well.

I know that one of the issues with regard to the construction of new schools across this province has aroused some criticism and fanned some of the coals, which I thought were dead, with regard to the separate school issue. I point out that the Ministry of Education follows criteria in establishing where the new schools are going to be built. The first question or criterion is, is the enrolment already present and growing? Second, is there space available in adjacent schools? Third, can the needs be met by other methods, such as additional portable classrooms or busing to another area? Fourth, will the school be needed in the area in the foreseeable future?

I have heard some criticism in our county, for example, that this year's announcements had a considerable number of approvals of construction in the separate school area and not as many in the public school area. But I point out that the ministry goes by the figures; It goes by the numbers.

I would like to point out, for example, that in the county of Simcoe, in 1985, the public schools had a total elementary and secondary enrolment of 39,476. The projected 1989 student enrolment figure is 41,737, which means a growth of student enrolment in that county in that period of 2,261.

Let's look over at the separate school enrolment in the same county. In 1985, the total enrolment was 7,401; this year it is 12,351. That means the separate school enrolment has grown, in that same period of time, by 4,950. In other words, there is a growth of students in the public school system of a couple of thousand as opposed to a growth of 5,000 in the separate schools. Of course, the government must meet the needs. We simply must identify where the growth is and try to work towards resolving that growth.

For example, in the south end of my riding, Holy Trinity High School received approval for an addition to the school. At the present time there are 16 portables sitting out on the grounds of that particular school. They do not have room for lockers. They have no gym; they have no cafeteria. Now with this approval, we are going to be able to try to reach out and meet that particular need.

I will then move on to the third long-term direction that has been identified in this throne speech. That, of course, is to try to identify the problem of poverty that we have in this province and what we can do to try to break the cycle of poverty which encompasses so many families. In my 30 years of practising law in Barrie and dealing with various charitable organizations that

have been trying to deal with the problems of poverty, I have seen, again and again, that poverty repeats itself. Unfortunately, the children I have seen who were struggling with poverty with their families are now grown up and they are still caught by that web of that poverty. Their children are reaching maturity and I see that they, the third generation, are still caught by the unfortunate chain reaction of this monster of poverty.

1520

We know that poverty leads to poor health, a shorter life span and lower educational achievements. We know that a number of answers are required, and I am happy to advise that only a matter of days ago we were able to announce that the Canadian Association for Community Living in the south part of our county was to receive more than \$125,000 in grants to establish a supported employment program in the area from the town of Bradford over to the town of Alliston, to serve adults with developmental handicaps.

The idea is that it will provide programming, planning and development of the purchase of equipment and supplies. We will provide annual funding to cover the operating costs. We are hoping that individuals can plan for employment with the emphasis on the interests and strengths that they have, rather than on the handicaps which afflict them. The establishment is part of the association's plan to downsize sheltered workshops in the south end of our county by offering alternatives in the community for adults who are developmentally handicapped.

This is the 70th anniversary of the election to Premier of the only person who has ever served as Premier and who has come out of our county of Simcoe. I know that earlier last week reference was made to the fact that this person represented Halton in this Legislature, but he actually farmed and grew up in Simcoe county. I am referring to Ernest Drury.

The United Farmers of Ontario party was elected in 1919. It did not have a leader. Mr Drury did not even run in that election. He had run in 1917 federally as a Liberal and he later ran as a Liberal in the 1920s federally, but he never succeeded in being elected, except that here he agreed to serve as leader and as Premier of the United Farmers of Ontario in 1919.

One of the significant things about Mr Drury's career in this Legislature is that he introduced the first mother's allowance program anywhere in North America. Mr Drury was a man of high quality. He was educated. He had tremendous eloquence. He had a voice that if he whispered it

would fill this room. But he also had a conscience and a commitment to serve his fellow man. He was a very high conscience Methodist who felt that he had to do for other people.

I am happy to see that we are following and pursuing that particular type of program in Ontario in these years that our particular government is serving Ontario. I have been able to make frequent announcements for improved day care with regard to our riding.

Some opposition people have said there is no mention of housing in the throne speech, but I would like to point out that we have been a government of action with regard to meeting problems of housing. I would like to point out that up until now, until the most recent announcements regarding affordable housing and non-profit housing, there have been several hundred units built in Barrie alone. For example, one of the first was called Southfields, located in the south end of Barrie, with 67 units of a three-storey walkup apartment building.

Last year I was able to attend the opening of Cundles Terrace, which had 50 units in two three-storey apartment buildings. Another is under construction, Timbercrest, with 50 more units in two- and three-storey walkup apartments. We have more in the planning stage and under construction.

The Barrie Nonprofit Housing Authority has done a tremendous job, with volunteers, of getting more and more housing on side. The air force veterans in our community have worked towards more housing projects, and in February the Minister of Housing (Ms Hošek) was able to announce a project of \$2 billion of affordable housing across the province.

I was very pleased that she identified 650 new family and senior housing units for Barrie out of that program. I am pleased that it is meeting the needs of all sorts of families: the families who have children, the single mothers with children and the seniors as well. I commend the aggressiveness shown by the various organizations in my riding working towards supplying this much needed affordable housing.

We have talked about another direction in the throne speech, that is, to maintain a sense of safety and security in our communities and how critical that is to the future wellbeing and development of our province. The Premier (Mr Peterson) himself has many times suggested that we must accommodate the new peoples who are moving into our province, that it is a changing province.

In the last week, I have met with a number of schools. To give members an idea of how we are changing even in Simcoe county, I would like to point out that when I was meeting with grade 7 students from Minesing Central public school, I talked about the fact that the three leaders of our three parties in this Legislature all come from different backgrounds. I identified the Scandinavian background of the Premier, the background of the NDP leader, the leader of the official opposition and the background of the acting leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

I said to the students, "No matter what your background, no matter whether you were born here or your parents were born here, third generation or first generation in this province, you can aspire to and attain public office and there is no limit to what the opportunities are."

I asked in that class if there were any students who were born outside of Canada. There was only one student, who was born in the United States. I asked if there were any parents of those students who were born outside of Canada and three children had parents who were born outside of Canada: The one American had American parents and two others had parents born in Britain.

The next day, I met with grade 8 students at Pope John Paul II elementary school and I asked the same question after the same discussion. There were 10 children born outside of this country and half of the students had parents who were born out of this country. Our community is changing.

The next day, I met with grade 10 students from Holy Trinity High School in Bradford. There were a couple of classes there, and out of the entire group of grade 10 students there were 10 students only who were born in this country and only one child had parents born in this country, which shows the changing population we have, not just in what we normally think of as the Metropolitan Toronto area but extending into the counties around the Metro area.

It shows the tremendous opportunities we have for accommodating these new languages, these new cultures, these new skills and traditions and enriching our entire province.

1530

I know that one of the criticisms I hear of our system in our area is of the inadequacies of the present federal Young Offenders Act, and I commend the Attorney General (Mr Scott) for the position he has taken on this matter and for the concern he has shown in addressing some of these problems. I know he has discussed the

matter with his federal and other provincial counterparts and I sincerely hope adjustments will be made there.

I also know that it is through education and prevention programs that we will be able to try to ensure that the quality of life we have and enjoy in this province will be continued.

The fifth direction the throne speech offered was accessibility to quality health care for every person in this province regardless of his ability to pay, that this will remain a fundamental value and principle of our society.

In my riding, we have had the opportunity of seeing the commitment to quality health care proceed with this government's various programs. The Ministry of Health was spending just under \$4 billion 10 years ago. This year the budget is estimated at \$12.7 billion for health care. A decade ago, health care allocations in Ontario accounted for 27 per cent of all provincial spending. Today, Health ministry expenditures represent fully one third of our entire provincial budget. That is the equivalent of \$1.4 million each and every hour. There are still some people who feel that is not enough, that we are underfunded, but I suggest to this Legislature that the problem is not underfunding, but different funding.

I would like to point out some of the things that have been done in my area, for example. Over the last six years, the Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie received total increases in allocations of \$14 million, from \$19.7 million in 1983-84 to \$33.7 million in 1988-89, for a total increase in those six years of 71.3 per cent. The RVH will also receive \$458,800 in additional growth funding for 1988-89. In July 1987, it was announced that the Royal Victoria Hospital would receive \$60 million to build a new 363-bed acute care hospital and redevelop and expand its existing Ross Street premises for 140 chronic care bed accommodations.

In recent years, we have witnessed what can only be described as a massive technological explosion in the health care sciences. We have seen major breakthroughs in drug therapies and surgical procedures, we have witnessed a revolution in diagnostic services and equipment and we now have at our disposal sophisticated new techniques in patient care and assessment.

Only a matter of months ago, approval was given by the Health ministry of this province to the Royal Victoria Hospital to acquire a computerized axial tomography scanner. The ministry will provide \$150,000 in annual operating costs and the hospital will be able to bill the province

thousands of dollars annually for its use. The CAT scanner will provide an important diagnostic tool for doctors in the entire region and will help reduce the length of time patients must stay in hospital.

We must manage technology so that the outcome is better quality care. Unmanaged technology might simply mean an increase in the quantity but not the quality of services, and that is an outcome we cannot afford in either financial, or more important, human terms.

Other health expenditures in my riding over the past two years include an additional \$85,000 for every year to hire four more staff at Lewis Ambulance service in Bradford to provide 24-hour service seven days a week by that ambulance service. The Royal Victoria Hospital ambulance service got an additional \$176,000 annually to hire five new driver-attendants so that the service will have four fully staffed ambulances at Barrie station on weekdays and three during the day on weekends. Service from St Paul's ambulance station, which is in the very south end of Barrie, was expanded to around-the-clock service.

Mental Health Barrie, a branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association, received \$69,800 in annual funding to run a five-bed home for the psychiatrically disabled. In April of last year, Simcoe Outreach Services in Barrie received \$186,650 in annual operating funds and a one-time capital grant of \$21,000 to set up an alcohol treatment and counselling program for young people. Towards the end of last year, the Simcoe county health unit received \$70,000 for a project aimed at preventing cardiovascular disease.

Today, many chronic patients must turn to the hospital system for care and treatment because that is the only option they have. The high-technology, high-cost acute care provided in the hospital setting is not always the best alternative, nor is it always necessary. One of our most prestigious needs, therefore, is for a new network of community-based services and programs to meet health needs in circumstances that do not require institutional care.

Only a matter of weeks ago, I was able to announce \$128,000 in funding for a new community health centre in Barrie. The nonprofit citizens' committee will be setting up the centre and its primary focus will be services for approximately 9,600 people in Barrie over the age of 55, although patients of other age groups will also be served. Of the \$128,000, \$96,000

was the initial startup cost and \$32,000 will cover initial operating costs.

It will provide general medical care, rehabilitation and health promotion and information services. Once it is fully operational, it will have a full-time and a part-time physician, nurse, physiotherapist, nutritionist, health educator and special worker as well as administrative staff. Once it is fully operational, its annual operating budget is expected to be \$721,047.

I commend the volunteers who were involved in proposing this to the ministry and who gathered together the data that made this a successful proposal. It is hoped this will open in June or July this year. I would like to point out it is a recognition by the ministry of what is required in each individual community.

In Barrie, for example, our new hospital is not built as yet and we have a tremendous crush of needs at our emergency and other services. This should help to relieve some of that stress on the present facility. We also happen to have a larger number of seniors in our community than is the average across the province. Again, the ministry recognized this.

I commend the people who worked towards this health centre and I also commend the ministry for recognizing the need.

Again, only a number of weeks ago, I was able to announce the new Alzheimer's program to be operated by the Victorian Order of Nurses in our community. A \$115,000 annual operating fund was established for this. This program will provide personal care and support on a home-visiting basis to people with Alzheimer's disease. It will enable family care givers or individuals with Alzheimer's to experience a period of relief and time for themselves.

It will provide information and training to the care givers in the management of persons with dementia due to Alzheimer's. It will provide a standardized regime of care and stimulation to people with Alzheimer's disease by employing trained auxiliary health care workers to help the VON. It will provide knowledgeable, trained, professional supervisory staff who can monitor and direct the home support services offered and facilitate the introduction to family care givers of additional community resources and support networks.

1540

I was also able to announce recently a new program for hearing-impaired seniors in the Barrie area. The aim of this outreach was to provide information about the nature of hearing loss and the problems it causes and how the

problems can be solved. This information will be provided to senior citizens, as well as to appropriate medical and paramedical personnel who deal with the seniors. It will be assisting in the organization of aural rehabilitation to help people use their hearing aids effectively, to improve lip-reading skills, to develop coping strategies and to learn about assistive devices.

You will see, Mr Speaker, that we have been moving strongly and forcefully in the health direction for the province and in all of the ridings, and I can certainly speak for my own riding.

The sixth long-term direction the throne speech identified was working towards a clean and safe environment and to make it one of the cornerstones of promoting better health. We have indicated our leadership in the past in environmental protection and wish to indicate our commitment to ensuring the quality of air, water and food in the future.

Only a matter of days ago, we were able to announce that there would be a program provided to the Barrie Public Utilities Commission under the LifeLines infrastructure renewal program. A \$125,000 grant was initiated to pay for half of a \$250,000 study to identify deficiencies in the existing water distribution system.

Mains are like arteries: They start to clog up as they get older and you either clean them out or replace them. We are identifying what the needs are in the city of Barrie with regard to this problem. We do not expect that the study or any subsequent work will affect the quality of drinking water, but we are saying that we will improve the situation. In addition to this 50 per cent funding on the study, eligible corrective work will receive 33 per cent provincial funding under the LifeLines program. This year's allocation for the water distribution needs study is \$56,250, with the rest to follow.

The province has spent \$330 million on the LifeLines program and it will be prompting work of a remedial nature probably in the vicinity of \$1 billion.

We have a Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley) who has been recognized across North America as being at the thrust and forefront of identifying and dealing with the problems of the environment. We are very pleased that the educational centres across the province are behind him and are co-operating in the introduction of programs to help students develop a greater sense of personal responsibility for environmental protection. I am delighted that in the last number of months more and more of the

communities in my area have been joining the Blue Box program.

I know we have had considerable second thoughts about where we are going with the throne speech and how it will be paid for in light of a budget that came out of Ottawa a couple of days after the throne speech. We are concerned that the universality of Canada's social programs may be winding down as a result of that federal budget.

It would appear that starting this year, the rich will have all of their family allowance and old age pension benefits taxed away, and henceforth the federal government will not be contributing to unemployment insurance. It is silly to hear the argument that programs that eliminate all benefits to some are still universal. It is as silly as saying federally that the reversal of universality will help the poor; that is equally silly. It does not help the poor at all. The poor do not get any more; it is simply that the government is paying less.

We ask ourselves, in light of these cutbacks, what is going to happen to the present child care programs we have in this province and other child care programs we were hoping to introduce. What will happen to our health care programs, to our educational programs and to our road programs? We have a federal government that is now taking more tax out of gasoline than the province and contributing not one penny towards highway construction or repair.

But I have faith in the commitment of this government. It has its priorities. The Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) has a commitment to fiscal responsibility, but he also has a commitment to caring for the needs and problems of the people of this province. I know that a week tomorrow we will have our moment of truth when the Treasurer introduces his budget, but I have every confidence he will find ways, maybe in an innovative manner, to support the ongoing thrust of this throne speech and the commitment of this government to look after the needs of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr M. C. Ray): Are there any comments or questions?

Mr Neumann: I would like to commend the member for his fine speech and his outline of the various programs contained within the speech from the throne. I would like to commend him for the obvious amount of work he has been doing in promoting government programs within his riding. As he detailed program after program and announcement after announcement, it is obvious to me, and I am sure to all members in this House, that he has been doing a great deal of work in making sure his area benefits from the

very fine programs fleshed out during the last session of the Legislature. I am sure that over the coming two or three years, his area will continue to benefit from the kinds of programs outlined in the speech from the throne.

Mr Elliot: I would like to make a few comments of commendation as well about the member for Simcoe Centre's fine address with respect to the thrust of the speech from the throne. He and I go a long way back. I recall the day I met him back in 1971 when he was running for the Liberal Party for the second time and I was running for it for the first time. We were in adjacent ridings at that point in time.

I would like to accentuate the comments made by my colleague the member for Brantford (Mr Neumann) by commenting that the number of times the member for Simcoe Centre has run and the years he has kept active are paying off now for the good citizens of Barrie and the surrounding county of Simcoe.

The strong economic forecast we can look to, because of the type of initiatives that are coming along in the speech from the throne, indicates that for a good number of years he will be able to stand up, and year after year announce more commitments to that fine part of Ontario. It is obvious that the educational field, the health field and the social service field are being well addressed in that area, and obviously a strong economy is necessary for that.

As well, in his concluding remarks he accentuated the fact that we have a fine Minister of the Environment in Ontario at the present time, a leader in that field, in the world really, and he acknowledged that the number of initiatives in that area the minister has been able to put in place over the last period of time is quite commendable. To see that translated into a specific riding has been gratifying, so I would like to conclude by commending him on his address again.

1550

Mr Farnan: In replying to the speech from the throne, I want to focus attention on the continuing crisis in our health care system. The government has attempted in the throne speech to divert attention away from health and housing because it has failed miserably over four years to adequately address these problem areas.

As members of Her Majesty's loyal opposition, we are duty-bound to keep the government focused on the issues of primary concern to the people of Ontario. The government may indeed wish to run away from these troublesome questions, lacking as it is in both vision and

political will; but we would indeed be negligent in our responsibilities if we were to permit the government to take such a devious course unchallenged or if we were to fail to insist that the government come to terms with the malaise that exists within the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Housing.

I have already spoken at length on the housing crisis during the course of the estimates debates on the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations, particularly the extraordinary need to bring on stream decent, affordable housing, so today I intend to place my emphasis on the problems that beset our health care system, to examine the critical role that nurses play in the delivery of quality health care, to review the role of our nursing professionals, the registered nurses and the registered nursing assistants, and how they are perceived by the user group, the people of Ontario, and finally, to look at some recommendations which, if implemented, would help in addressing the crisis in health care.

During the month of February, I communicated with the residents of the great riding of Cambridge on the issue of medical care in Ontario. The letter I addressed to the people of Cambridge was entitled "Your Health and the Nursing Crisis." It is my conviction that nurses are the front-line providers of health care, and if we can take any pride in our health care system, much of that credit must go to our nurses. In recognizing the contribution of nurses, I want to make it clear that when I refer to nurses, I include both RNs and RNAs.

It is appropriate in responding to the throne speech at this time, this being Nurses Week in Ontario, that we recognize the key role that nurses have played and continue to play in providing us with quality health care.

I attached to the letter I sent to my constituents a mail-back questionnaire, the results of which I would like to share with all members of the House today. To date, I have had 882 replies. Many of these were from practising nurses, nurses who have left the profession in frustration and aspiring nurses who are questioning their career choice or wondering why jobs are not available if indeed there is a shortage of nurses. For sure, all of the respondents have had experience with the health care system as patients. I can honestly say I have never received so many lengthy letters on any single issue.

What I will present to the House today is the judgement of a well-informed cross-section of the Cambridge community, and I venture to suggest that the overall evaluation of the

Cambridge survey reflects the views of the province as a whole.

The following figures represent the statistical response to the critical question, "Do you agree that it is time for the Liberal government to take action in support of our nurses?" Yes: 835, 94 per cent; no: 23, three per cent; undecided: 23, three per cent.

Very clearly, I say to the members of the House, it is the view of the citizens of Cambridge and by extension, I project, the view of the people of Ontario, that there is a need for government action to support our nurses, and the overwhelming opinion condemns the lack of such action on the part of this Liberal government.

I have taken a selection of quotations from the many comments made by my constituents. These comments are representative of the respondents as a whole, and they reflect the main themes and concerns expressed by those who replied to my survey:

"It may be doctors and administrators who make the decisions, but it is the nurses who keep you alive"—BQ, Stewart Avenue.

"Nurses are the unsung heroes of our health system"—BG, Angela Crescent.

"Cambridge is lucky to have so many caring nurses"—Mr and Mrs IB, Ravine Drive.

However, there is also a recognition that these caring professionals are working in a very demanding situation:

"Nurses do a wonderful job under adverse conditions"—JS, West River Road.

"As a volunteer at CMH, I see the utter dedication of nurses who are struggling to keep up the high standards of their honourable profession"—CMH volunteer.

It appears that our health care system is surviving because of the extraordinary dedication of our nurses.

"As a full-time RN, I have seen an incredible increase in our workload, additional responsibilities with no gratification or recognition for a job well done. There are definite high expectations from the public as well as the hospital administration. These stresses are becoming overwhelming"—Cambridge nurse.

"I have been in the nursing profession a relatively short time and already I have had to deal with giving less than adequate care due to shortages of staff"—Cambridge nurse.

"I don't think the average person knows the frustrations of not being able to give the proper kind of care and time to patients because of shortness of staff"—DL, Hopeton Street.

One resident summed up the comments of many others with this brief statement:

"Fact: Nurses are overworked. Fact: Nurses are taken for granted. Fact: Nurses are unappreciated by some doctors. Fact: Nurses are underpaid"—RC, Norfolk Avenue.

I should point out that while many constituents support increased salaries for nurses, the nurses themselves see remuneration as only one of their concerns, albeit an important concern. Many nurses stressed they wanted to work in an environment with nurse-patient ratios that would allow them to provide quality care:

"All most of us want is more respect and a share in decision-making"—Cambridge nurse.

"I don't enjoy being short-staffed and working in unsafe conditions. It's not just the nurses who suffer from the ministry cutbacks but also the patients who aren't receiving adequate care because we don't have the time to spend with them"—Cambridge nurse.

"The nursing crisis is not about money; it is about stress, responsibility, dignity, respect and the ability to do our jobs safely and competently"—Cambridge nurse.

These comments should not surprise us, for increasingly nurses are expected to do not only their job but the jobs previously assigned to clerks, secretaries and orderlies. They are expected to work overtime after an already stressful 12-hour shift. They never know in advance whether they will be working with a regular complement of co-workers or whether they will be expected to do the work of two or three. They are given few opportunities for advancement, no financial remuneration for years of experience and have little to say in shift schedules.

1600

There was no doubt that the nurses also see remuneration as a matter that needs to be addressed. It is certainly one of the factors that is causing nurses to reflect upon their continuation in the profession. It is significant, however, that not one of the many nurses who replied raised the issue of wages in isolation. But we must be careful. In a society that recognizes the importance and value of an individual's contribution by the salary earned, we would be foolish not to recognize the need to better compensate our nurses.

"I left the nursing profession 15 years ago. No amount of money would tempt me to return to hospital-based work"—AM, Cooper Street.

"I plan to work here in southern Ontario, but if the situation worsens, I am going to the States"—Cambridge nurse.

"I'm an RN and a single mother. It's very difficult looking after a home and raising two children on a nurse's salary. I enjoy my job and believe in what I am doing. Show me a man with a university education who makes what I do"—Cambridge nurse.

I would suggest to the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) that we do not take our nurses for granted. Both RNs and RNAs must be given the assurance that their importance and significant contribution is appreciated. Certainly this demands increased respect, but it also demands recognition in a very practical manner by improving the financial remuneration for their essential service.

Very simply, I say to the minister and to this government, the time is long overdue to show the nurses that we mean what we say when we sing their praises. We can do this by increasing their wages.

Inadequate funding is identified by many as a root cause of the problem, and the belief exists that the government does not allow for changes that are occurring in our area of the province; that is, areas of rapid growth.

"Communities in southern Ontario have been expanding rapidly in recent years. Hospitals and schools have not been keeping pace with this growth"—RS, Pine Street.

"I would like to know how we can live in an area, Cambridge, that has seen its population increase by thousands in the past few years but whose hospital has been told that it must cut back on its budget"—RG, Chestnut Street.

"I believe the issue does not lie solely with the shortage of nurses but has to do with the budget constraints by the Ministry of Health"—NV, Lowrey Avenue.

While a very large number of residents commented on the professionalism and dedication of our Cambridge nurses, I did receive a considerable number of replies outlining their dissatisfaction and concern with the system. In the letter to my constituents, I raised the issue of prolonged and repeated delays of constituents waiting for emergency surgery, and it was obvious from the replies that I received that Emilie LeBlanc of Kitchener, Hugh Allen of Kitchener and Fernando Frazao of Cambridge were not isolated cases.

"My next-door neighbour's operation for heart surgery was postponed three times. He died. It's getting to be a disgusting situation"—resident, First Avenue.

"I've been exposed to the waiting game for hospital beds for what they call elective surgery.

I was told to avoid stress, yet had two postponements of surgery. If this delay is not a cause of stress, then I don't know what is"—JR, Hepel Avenue.

"It's a ridiculous situation when a critically ill person has to go to the USA for a life-threatening operation. I think this government should shape up or ship out"—JN, Tracy Court.

"It seems a shame that there are two levels of health care: one for the rich and one for the poor. I am sure if Mr Peterson or Mrs Caplan required an emergency bypass operation, they would not be dying before they were booked for the operation"—RB, Regent Street.

"Because of fear of being bumped down the list, many patients and their families do not go public with their case. My father-in-law waited from April to October last year for triple-bypass surgery. It seems there is a quota on how many people with possibly fatal problems will be dealt with because of the cost"—name withheld, Cambridge resident.

To exemplify the continuation of this unacceptable situation, I want to read into the record two cases that were brought to my attention in the last couple of weeks. The first case is that of Frank H. Schaller. I read the following letter from Mr Schaller addressed to the Minister of Health:

"Dear Mrs Caplan:

"My name is Frank Schaller, 29 years of age, and I am writing you due to the nature of my past, present and future health. On 17 September 1984 at the KW hospital I had a malignant brain tumour, astrocytomas, removed. Following that, I was moved to Victoria Hospital cancer clinic for radiation and chemotherapy treatment.

"Since my recovery of cancer in September 1986, I have suffered many side-effects. My major problem is the seizures I experience on a daily basis. In order to control these seizures, I must take a great deal of medication"—and he enumerates Dilantin, fluorazepam, Phenobarbital—"all on a daily basis."

"This medication has also caused numerous side-effects that cause me problems in my daily life, memory loss being the most significant. As a result of my limited short-term memory, I have faced problems obtaining secure employment and I find I have problems in my social life with both friends and family. I am eager to once again lead a healthy, fulfilling life.

"Recently I met with specialists in epilepsy, Dr Girvin and Dr Lowney, at the University Hospital in London, Ontario. Through X-rays and a series of tests, these doctors are confident

they can stop my seizures by surgery with an 85 to 99 per cent success rate and a recovery period of five to seven days. This would also mean an elimination of the medication and a return of my memory.

"I am writing to you for assistance. Obviously I am very eager to have this surgery as soon as possible. However, the doctors have informed me of extensive waiting lists because of a lack of funding. The sooner I have this surgery, the sooner I can get on with the rest of my life. I hope you will give serious consideration to my request to have this surgery as soon as possible."

It is signed by Frank Schaller.

1610

Frank is one of the finest young men you could possibly meet. Just a few short years ago he was a member of the Canadian wrestling team and a physical education student at a university. Because of his ill health and his memory loss, he has had to withdraw from that career. Here is an operation about which the doctors say has an 85 to 99 per cent success rate and a recovery period of five to seven days, and would mean elimination of the medication and the return of Frank's memory. Surely to goodness this is a condemnation of a health care system. I urge the minister to address this particular case and to address it promptly.

The second case I wish to draw to the attention of the House is a letter from the Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital, addressed to Mr Himes, dated 27 April 1989. It is under the signature of S. R. Iwan, MD, vice-president, medical services.

"It is with regret that I inform you that your lens implant surgery scheduled at Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital on 16 May 1989 has been cancelled. Effective immediately, the Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital is having to discontinue all lens implants procedures.

"As you are undoubtedly aware, hospitals have been plagued over the last few years with increasing financial difficulties as a result of the limited funding available to health care. This year's Ministry of Health allocation to hospitals represents a four per cent increase over last year. This level of increase simply does not meet the costs of running the hospital's present services. As a result, we have had to implement serious cutbacks in a number of areas of the hospital.

"I would like to assure you that the decision to discontinue the lens implant procedures and to reduce other hospital services has not been made lightly. This decision is a result of many months

of deliberations and consultation between the hospital administration and medical staff.

"I apologize for the inconvenience I am sure this will cause you and your family. Please contact your doctor as soon as possible to have your surgery rebooked elsewhere and to resume your appropriate treatment program."

Again, this is a very tragic reflection of the state of health care in Ontario. I would appeal to the Minister of Health to demonstrate some generosity of spirit and ensure that these cases and other similar cases be addressed. It is simply unacceptable when we have people waiting months for emergency surgery and hundreds of hospital beds closed because of a lack of qualified nurses. Sadly, it is often not until a health care emergency hits someone in our own family that we notice the serious decline in health care services.

The government, however, cannot claim ignorance of the reasons for the nursing shortage. I and my fellow New Democrats here at Queen's Park have been hammering this home to this government for many months. I suspect my constituents in Cambridge are correct and that a relative of the Minister of Health, of the Premier (Mr Peterson) or of any cabinet minister would not be subjected to the same long delays.

I do not want to be raising some tragic case in this Legislature and blasting the Minister of Health for her lack of action on this issue. Nor, do I suspect, any other members of this assembly, whatever side of the House they sit on. However, I want nurses to be encouraged to remain in their chosen profession. I want them to have an active role in health care policy development.

I want to see support staff made available so that nurses can do the work they were trained for, which is caring for the ill and not doing cleaning, heavy lifting and clerical tasks. It is time for decisive action on the part of this government.

I believe that the response of the residents of Cambridge reflects that expressed in a Globe and Mail editorial on 16 September 1988 which read: "Nurses enjoy a lot of respect among Canadians, especially among those who have been patients in a hospital. But nurses themselves do not feel they enjoy much respect within the medical system. The unhappy state of nursing is among the compelling problems in our hospitals, and it must be addressed if the medical system is to function as it should."

The Minister of Health has repeatedly assured us that the nursing shortage is a cyclical problem and that there are no quick and easy solutions.

She is wrong. It is not that we do not have enough nurses, but rather that they are voting with their feet. Nurses are leaving, hospital beds are closing and we are all at risk.

The real issue is one of burnout, stress and lack of support for nurses in the very difficult task of caring for the ill. I would direct the Minister of Health and this government to the report of the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario and to other reports by nursing groups from the Ontario Nurses' Association.

These reports identified burnout, poor pay, lack of respect and lack of decision-making authority as among the most common complaints made by nurses. They also put the finger on the root of the problem, namely, the nursing profession's relative lowly status within the power structure of health care bureaucracies. As a result, nursing services are the first to be put on the chopping block. One does not have to be a genius to understand that when you cut nurses, you reduce the quality of patient care.

New Democrats have thoroughly examined the situation, and we have clearly articulated where the New Democratic Party stands with regard to enhancing the salaries of nurses and to empowering nurses within the decision-making boards of hospitals and the health care system.

I invite all members of this House, particularly the Liberal backbench members, to get up to speed on this issue. I encourage them to meet and discuss the nursing situation with those nurses who work in hospitals in their ridings. I encourage the backbench Liberal members to go out and talk to the user group, their constituents, about what happens to the quality of health care when nursing positions are cut and the remaining staff must spread themselves too thinly.

It is very clear that the Minister of Health is wearing blinkers and refuses, for whatever reason, to ignore the crisis in nursing. I say to the Liberal backbenchers that they have a responsibility to become informed and to pass on the facts about the real world to the Minister of Health.

How sad it was today that the Liberal backbench member for Simcoe Centre (Mr Owen), in his review of health care within his riding, did so completely without reference to the unacceptable situation of nurses. He talked about this grant and that grant, but he failed to recognize the fundamental problem that must be addressed, namely, the unacceptable conditions in which nurses work and the lack of proper remuneration.

I have had meetings with representatives of the Ontario Nurses' Association and the Registered

Nurses Association of Ontario. I have examined and studied their detailed reports as well as those prepared by the Ontario Association of Registered Nursing Assistants. I have talked to many registered nurses and registered nursing assistants as I researched this issue and I can assure the members that as legislators, we had better listen to those front line professionals.

It is the nurses and the recommendations emanating from the various nursing associations that provide our best hope for resolving the crisis in health care.

1620

Various reports of the Ontario Nurses' Association, the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario and the OARNA identified the increasing shortage of nurses and demonstrated how the remaining nurses are left in a situation of salary compression, lack of economic incentive to work in specialty areas and are being asked to perform tasks that should be more appropriately assigned to support services.

I quote directly from the report which suggests that the situation had reached "explosive proportions" as of November 1988:

"While 'crisis' is an overworked word in the liturgy of health care system politics, it is the most appropriate term to describe today's nursing shortage, and the quality of patient care is at a very serious risk today as a direct result of the nursing shortages that have occurred because nurses are fed up with their working conditions, compensation and quality of working life."

Surely that has to be clear enough for us to understand, as legislators.

"We believe that our first priority should be to provide a package of incentives and enhanced status to nurses in order to attract more nurses back into the profession and to attract part-time nurses back to full-time staff positions and to retain nurses already in the system. Such a strategy is both prudent, since it can be implemented quickly, and cost-effective, since it will cost our society at least \$28,000 to replace each existing nurse through education programs.

"Our health care system has a clear choice: We can spend \$168 million over the next 10 years replacing the estimated 6,000 additional nurses who will leave the profession or we can implement appropriate and less costly reforms and incentives to retain them within the system."

They urge hospital boards and other health facilities and services to establish nursing resource policy committees with representatives from the nursing team and that these committees

would recommend appropriate changes to the board.

It is cost-effective for us, as legislators, to provide an environment, to provide salaries for our nurses, to provide a climate in which nurses have respect and dignity and a share in the decision-making process. It is cheaper to do that than it is to see nurses drained away from a profession and then to have to train their replacements at great expense to the taxpayer. That is very simple.

The reports of the associations representing nurses have provided very specific recommendations, and the government should listen to these recommendations and should act promptly to implement them:

Adopt premium pay; adopt premium pay scales to attract nurses to difficult-to-staff units; increase the range between the starting salary and the maximum rate on the nurse pay scales; increase the current shift differential pay rates for evenings, nights and weekend work; introduce pay bonuses to nurses for the acquisition of additional skills and knowledge obtained through continuing education courses; introduce flexibility that would allow full-time nurses to opt for cash in lieu of benefits for individuals who would prefer that option.

As we readjust the remuneration of our registered nurses, it is imperative that the wages of registered nursing assistants should be similarly adjusted. We must always remember that RNs and RNAs complement each other. They are partners in the delivery of quality health care and together RNs and RNAs make up the nursing team that provides us with health needs.

It is also extremely important that the role of nurses be empowered, by giving nurses a greater voice in the decision-making process. How else, I ask members, can we expect to instil and renew a sense of dignity and worth among the nursing professionals who represent the heart and soul of our health care delivery system? I urge hospital boards to establish a nursing resource policy committee that will, as part of its mandate, examine the concept of self-scheduling and introduce it at the institution if there is consensus among the nurses that such a change would be an improvement over the existing system.

I urge that these committees undertake a review of the staffing complements in order to maximize the skills of the nurses in their employ, that these committees recommend to hospital boards an official policy on continuing education for nurses at every level, that these committees also examine appropriate ways to empower

nurses to have a meaningful voice in the policy development process within their institutions as well as appropriate steps to enhance the quality of working life of all nurses and, finally, that the government of Ontario amend the Public Hospitals Act to transform the existing medical advisory committees into professional advisory committees with nursing representation.

Again, I underscore the fact that as we rejuvenate the status of nursing we are mindful to incorporate the very significant contribution not only of RNs but also of RNAs and that the voice of RNAs is worthy of being heard also. Let us never forget that a worker who is a professional, such as an RNA, and who is dedicated to providing quality service is not simply someone we move around and slot here and there. They are individuals with dignity, skill, competence, knowledge, dedication and commitment, and it is incumbent upon this government to ensure that hospital boards bring forward from the nurses and provide for all of our nurses the opportunity to be empowered within the health care system.

An article in the *Toronto Star* of 18 September 1988 quotes Gwen Borden, a former staff nurse at Toronto's Sunnybrook Medical Centre: "It is not going to be safe for someone to get sick because there isn't going to be anyone there to take care of them. A lot of nurses in the hospital think it is ludicrous. We can barely look after them now." This is the story we have heard time and again from the nurses of this province. I hope all members of this House will join me in insisting on action from the Minister of Health.

It was impossible to include the comments of all my constituents who submitted interesting anecdotes, experiences and concerns. However, I do want to thank everyone who replied to my survey. As a result of the input from my constituents, I am certainly better informed, and I trust that as a result of my comments today, the members of this House, the Minister of Health and the government will also be better informed.

1630

My hope, of course, is that the government will take to heart the views of the people of Cambridge and, I suspect, the views of the people of Ontario, and most important, that the government will take serious notice of what the nurses of Ontario have to say. It is my hope that the government will set about addressing the very positive and constructive recommendations I have made today, which essentially are the recommendations that have come forward from the nursing associations. I might add that these

recommendations would have the support of the people of Ontario.

Let me say in conclusion that the overwhelming opinion of Cambridge residents, as expressed to me through the replies of my constituents, is summed up in this one comment:

"Yes, the nurses in our hospitals need our support to encourage them to stay with their profession and to reimburse them with adequate pay for their services to our friends, families and ourselves. Sooner or later, most of us are going to require their services. We need them and they need our full support.

"A. McG, Vine Street."

The Deputy Speaker: Are there any questions and comments on the member's statement?

Mr Wildman: I would just like to congratulate my colleague the member for Cambridge on his excellent presentation and to commend him for bringing forward to the House particularly the deficiencies in the throne speech with regard to health care and the position of nurses in our health care system.

I think it is most unfortunate that we would have a throne speech presented to this House that purports to deal with the issues of health, but as my colleague said, does not make any mention of the terrible crisis we have in the shortage of nurses and what effect that has on our hospital care and the care of patients across Ontario. I hope the government will heed the comments my colleague the member for Cambridge has made.

Mr Villeneuve: I too want to compliment the member for Cambridge for touching on a subject that is very near to the people of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, and indeed to myself as the representative of that area.

The nursing profession is getting short-changed; there is no doubt about it. I think he outlined very eloquently the problems faced by this particular profession. In many instances, we have hospital space but we are short of nurses. We know that we have a large number of trained nurses throughout the province, but something slightly more, in numbers, than 50 per cent practise their profession on an ongoing full-time basis. I think that says a great deal about the problems being faced at present by the health services and by our trained nurses in this province.

I think this government has undertaken in many instances to polarize people. I think Bill 94 brought the doctors to their knees, and of course the public of Ontario applauded at that time. We now have the dilemma faced by insurance companies, insurance agents and the public of

Ontario. I think they have polarized that situation. It cost \$7 million to bring in a report. That does not include the many millions of dollars that were spent by both insurance companies and insurance agents to get ready to implement the report of the commission.

Unilaterally, overnight, the minister in charge decided to come around completely, to go totally against what he had told this Legislature on numerous occasions, and to unilaterally impose a 7.6 per cent increase.

Indeed, the polarization is on. We are not quite sure what will happen in this instance, but very much in the same light as was explained on the nursing profession, we have the polarization of different groups. This will be ongoing. I think we can notice in many instances that this government seems to promote polarization and then the war is on. That is the concern I have.

Mr Neumann: I just want to comment briefly on the speech of the member for Cambridge. He certainly played the opposition role of criticizing the government's position in a number of areas with respect to health care.

I would like to point out, however, that this government has made a strong commitment to health in previous budgets and in this throne speech. Increased spending in the area of health care: It has gone up quite dramatically. Increased transfer payments to hospitals have been significant. We have a Minister of Health who is dedicated to the role of nurses and has done a great deal through consultation with nurses at a variety of levels in giving nurses a say on hospital boards right across Ontario, making them feel part of the decision-making process in health care.

I think some of the positive things with respect to the government's involvement in health care need to be said. I understand the role the member for Cambridge plays; however, the government itself has shown great leadership in this area. Certainly, all the problems have not been solved. There are many players in this field. There are many interest groups involved in health care throughout our province.

But the consultation process is in place, the leadership is there, the dedication of the Minister of Health is unquestionable and we, as a government and as legislators, must ensure that the tremendous amount of money spent in this field is spent effectively and wisely, and that we not only look at meeting the needs of the people of the province in such a way that health care is fully accessible to people, but that we plan for the future in an effective manner and encourage, in a

positive way, healthy lifestyles and the avoidance of disease and illness, as well as meeting the needs of people directly.

Mr Farnan: I want to respond to the member for Brantford (Mr Neumann) who is totally out of touch with the nurses in Brantford. He is totally out of touch with the situation.

Mr Neumann: You are responsible for Cambridge.

Mr Farnan: He talked about responsibility. The nurses have very clearly put forward a situation that says it is cheaper to provide nurses with the proper kind of remuneration, to provide them with the proper kind of environment in which to do their work, than simply to pay the top price to retrain nurses who are leaving the profession.

This member for Brantford has tried to gloss over the problem by saying, "We spent this amount of money." Simply throwing money at a problem might be a Liberal way of addressing a situation, but it is what you do with the money you spend. The nurses are saying to the member for Brantford that if we spend the money properly, we can give them their proper remuneration and actually save money.

The problem is that since the Liberal government came in, it has failed to do what the New Democrats have been suggesting to it for years, to invest in preventive health care, to put its money up front and stop people from getting sick.

It is taking money away from sports and culture. We have said to them as a government that if we have a healthy body and healthy mind, we are going to have a healthy society. What this government is doing is taking money out of preventive health care, taking that lottery fund and saying, "We'll use it at the other end of the scale."

The government's record is a sad one and a misguided one. It is absolutely wrong. Talk to the nurses in Brantford; they will set the government straight. Talk to the nurses in Brantford and they will say what the situation is. Talk to the nurses in Brantford and find out what the real world is like.

Mr Harris: I am indeed pleased to have this opportunity to respond to the speech from the throne. I want to tell the Premier (Mr Peterson) that my first response upon reading the government's priority agenda was shock. It did not seem possible to me that a government could be this out of touch with what is happening in Ontario, that a government could be this oblivious to crisis

all around it, that a government could be so totally devoid of direction and solutions.

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It struck me how different the tone of this throne speech was from the last one. Gone are the boasts of world-class this and world-class that, if the members will recall the last throne speech we heard from this government. The reality is this government has never delivered on any of those boasts. It has not even come close. In fact, whether it is health care, education, transportation or housing, the infrastructure across this province, our treasured institutions are indeed deteriorating.

The only thing world-class about the Peterson administration has been its mismanagement and its lack of direction. This is a government that has been wishy-washy, evasive at best, when it comes to handling important issues, issues like Sunday shopping and waste disposal. Whenever this government has been forced to make a tough decision, it looks for somebody else to make it for it. That way, it will have somebody else to blame.

On the rare occasions when they have attempted their own decisions, it really has been nothing short of disaster. It has already cost taxpayers some \$7 million to find out that the Premier's infamous Ontario Automobile Insurance Board has no business setting insurance rates. Voters are paying the price today for the Premier's, in quotes, specific plan to lower auto insurance rates. Consumers are paying for the \$60 million to \$70 million the industry estimates it spent to comply with what the government told it was going to be the new auto insurance plan.

It helps explain why the Peterson administration, as many of its own cabinet ministers and senior civil servants were quick to point out to an independent consultant, is indeed in a state of paralysis. It is hesitant to make decisions. It is jumping from crisis to crisis. It moves from impending issue to issue. Indeed, this is a government without solutions, without direction, without vision, and I say to members, is a government without leadership.

In short, it is a government that operates on simplistic solutions, on the spur of the moment, to complex problems that require a thought-out vision of where we want to go as a province and the step-by-step policies that can take us there. It is what I call the ready-fire-aim approach to policy, the kind we find throughout this speech from the throne.

Perhaps I should begin today by directing my remarks not so much at what the throne speech

contained but at what it did not contain, because if the throne speech reflects the government's agenda it also reflects an attitude.

I am sure it will not surprise members of this assembly that failure to make regional development a priority has been greeted with dismay by the people of northern Ontario. The north in fact did not even rate a single mention in the entire document. As my party's Northern Development critic and one who has represented northerners at Queen's Park since 1981, I really shared with my fellow northerners their astonishment at this fact.

Ontario has indeed prospered greatly over the past seven years, yet the people of northern Ontario have not shared in this prosperity. Judging by the speech from the throne, the Peterson Liberals do not seem to think there is a problem, or they do not know or they do not care. Perhaps they do recognize it, but this omission in this document is a flat admission that they have thrown up their hands in the air. They do not know what to do about it so they are not going to do anything about it.

On the other hand, if you take any issue that is mentioned as a government priority in the throne speech and apply it to the north, I say you will find that the problem is worse. That is because northern needs are different from those in the south. The people are different, the geography is different and the history is different; so southern solutions, Toronto solutions, do not work in the north. What may be appropriate for the Premier's street in Rosedale may not be appropriate, and indeed will not be, on my street in North Bay, or in Thunder Bay or Kenora.

The government should not try to tell me it has addressed northern educational concerns by talking about a new kindergarten initiative. They should not tell me they have addressed northern social needs by talking about shelter needs in Toronto. They should not tell me they have addressed northern health care needs when there are places in northern Ontario that have no doctors, that need more nurses and that do not even have a building in which to treat patients. Northern Ontario is indeed different.

While I am confident and northerners are confident that the challenges can be met, I am convinced more than ever that they will continue to be ignored as long as this government and this Premier fail to come to grips with some sense of northern understanding.

To ignore the north is inexcusable; to argue that it has not been ignored is unforgivable. That was perhaps highlighted at the recent meeting of the northeastern Ontario mayors and reeves when

they passed a resolution, not in jest, suggesting that they pool their resources and establish a consulate, if you like, an embassy in Toronto. This is how out of touch they feel the Premier and this government are with northern Ontario: They think they should spend money to set up an embassy here in Toronto to be able to lobby this government.

There are a number of areas that were not mentioned in the throne speech, not the least of which is housing. For some strange, and I suggest perverted reason, the Peterson administration is the only entity in the province that does not recognize housing as a priority. I will be the first one to admit that when this government came to power, there were the beginnings of a serious housing problem. Today, after four years of meddling, intervention and dealing with the symptoms instead of that problem, we now have a full-blown crisis on our hands.

This is a result of another Liberal approach to policy development, and it is one they share with the NDP: If it moves, you tax it. If it keeps moving, you regulate it. If by some strange coincidence you have not stopped it altogether and it is still moving, you tax it some more and then you regulate it some more. When you finally stop it, you announce a big program that you are going to subsidize it. That is how you treat symptoms instead of the problem.

Surely the cheaper, more logical solution is not to create the problem in the first place. The acceptable vacancy rate for rental units in a healthy society is about three per cent. In David Peterson's Ontario it is less than one per cent. In Metropolitan Toronto and countless other communities, it is less than 0.1 per cent. Average rental prices in Metropolitan Toronto are the second highest in the world, yet we have people making \$100,000 a year and more in rent-controlled units. In fact, we know that in Metro, 51 per cent of all people making more than \$40,000 a year pay less than 15 per cent of their income on rent. That figure is increasing every year that this government is in office.

At one time, 80 per cent of rental housing in Ontario was built by the private sector at no cost to the government, at no cost to the taxpayers. Thanks to this government's Bill 51, thanks to this government's Bill 11 and its successor bills, thanks to a bureaucracy, to more red tape, to intervention after intervention, thanks to the taxes and even more regulation and now the threat of even more regulation, less than 20 per cent of rental units are now constructed by the

rental sector. It has gone from 80 per cent to 20 per cent.

They have regulated it. They have taxed it. They still have a little way to go to shut down the final 20 per cent, but now they will have to subsidize it all. The government spends in excess of \$40 million per year to administer rent review that everybody—tenants and landlords, everybody except the minister—acknowledges is getting worse every day and is not working. Four years ago, it spent less than \$8 million.

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Even though the rent review system is not working, it is even harder to get into home ownership. Only four per cent of Metro tenants can ever dream of affording to own a home anywhere in this area at current prices. Housing prices in Metro, the highest in Canada, have risen more than 141 per cent in the last four years. Why? It now takes from three to seven years for developers to get through the red tape imposed by government before they can even start to build. When they do build, home buyers must pay in the order of \$500 million in land transfer taxes imposed by this Liberal Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon).

That is not enough, though, for the Premier. In the midst of the worst affordable housing crisis in Ontario history, he is planning to introduce a new lot levy tax on housing, which we estimate will be in the range of \$165 million a year, which the industry estimates will add over \$8 billion to all the existing housing stock. Increase the affordability problem by \$8 billion to get \$165 million. Does that make sense?

Where do the Liberals stand on housing? It is not in the throne speech. The Liberal Minister of Housing (Ms Hošek) refuses to say one word against land transfer taxes or the new lot levy proposals. She will not even commission an impact analysis to help her have the ammunition she requires to share with her Premier, her Treasurer and her cabinet colleagues, to point out how misguided this proposal is. No, they are going to plod along. They are going to jump from crisis to crisis; they are going to jump from problem to problem. They are going to try to legislate away the symptoms of an ever-growing mess.

Some day a new government is going to have to clean up this mess and it is not going to be easy. I do not believe it is impossible. In fact, I do not believe it is that difficult if a government applies the kind of vision and planning and is honest with the people and has the common sense that is so lacking under the current administra-

tion. It will begin, that new government, with the speech from the throne.

I want to talk a bit about social assistance. I am delighted that the minister is here reading *Age Wave*. The Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr Sweeney) is, in my view, and in the view, I think, of most who know him, a decent and caring man. I know he wants to reform social assistance in this province. Like all members of this House, I know he wants to see an end to poverty.

For that reason, it must pain the minister to see the last line in the social assistance section of the throne speech, the copout line, what we have come to expect from this government, what this government has become indeed famous for. The last line reads, "Progress in this area will require the financial support and co-operation of all levels of government and the community at large." I want to translate that line. In other words, this government has no intention whatsoever of improving the situation for those on social assistance or of taking the necessary steps needed to help prevent people from getting on social assistance in the first place.

Of course, it is not their fault. This copout clause is so very convenient. The government is hoping that will allow it to maintain a posture of wanting to reform social assistance, of having the document there, of espousing the desire, but not being able to because it will be able to claim that other levels of government were not co-operating with it.

I say to the Minister of Community and Social Services and to the Premier that I am sure they think that this tactic is a good one, that politically it is clever, it is smart. Once again, they think they have found yet another way to get around making a tough decision, to get around showing true leadership, but this time I believe they are dead wrong, because this answer is not good enough for the people of Ontario. The people of Ontario are seeing through these types of answers.

It is not good enough for the 178,000 people in this province with disabilities who do need social assistance. It is not good enough for the 166,000 women who are single parents and who are struggling desperately to make ends meet, and for the 3,500 children who are living in poverty in a town the size of North Bay.

Maybe the Premier should tell me what I should say to Sylvie, a young woman in my riding who has been left a widow with three children under the age of eight and no family to turn to for help; or to Colleen, a woman in her

mid-30s who took her three children out of a physically abusive home with nothing more than the clothes on their backs and who is now not only trying her best to cope with that situation but is currently being treated for cervical cancer.

Both of these women and their children, through no fault of their own, are forced to turn to social assistance to get by and they just barely get by with a monthly income that, once the rent is paid, gives them barely enough money to buy food that consists mainly of pastas, canned goods and potatoes. There is not enough money for fresh fruit, vegetables, milk or meat.

I ask the Premier and I ask the Minister of Community and Social Services how they would explain to Sylvie and Colleen why in the richest of all the provinces, one that has experienced an economic boom for the past five years and that saw in the last budget alone the government grab an additional \$1.4 billion in tax revenue, there is not enough money available to provide proper assistance for those who desperately need it.

Maybe at the same time the Premier can explain to Sylvie and Colleen why he had \$7 million to throw down the toilet with his idiotic Ontario Automobile Insurance Board at the same time as their children, out of necessity, were receiving meals at the soup kitchen in North Bay.

To me, one of the most frustrating aspects of this government has been its inability to implement any kind of long-term direction or strategy, while it is vitally important to improve the quality of life for those currently receiving social assistance. It is also imperative that the government institute a policy directed to help prevent people from needing social assistance in the first place.

Studies by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education have shown that adolescent girls still do not expect to work for most of their adult lives and are making career and educational decisions based on the belief that their husbands will provide economically for them and for their family. Yet the reality is that most women will need to work their entire adult lives and that almost 50 per cent of all women with children will end up as the sole source of family financial support because of divorce, abuse, illness and death.

In order to deal with this, we need to look at implementing education programs in our schools that will make young girls more aware of their future family responsibilities and will provide them with the necessary skills and training to cope with what realistically lies ahead of them.

We also know that studies have shown that children of people on social assistance often themselves end up on social assistance, particularly female children. We must find an end to this cycle. The establishing of programs in schools that will identify high-risk children and that will provide them with the support and guidance necessary to keep them from repeating the family history really is an option that we must look at.

Unfortunately, I do not see anything in the throne speech that indicates to me that this government has any plans, strategy or interest in helping people avoid becoming welfare recipients in the first place, and without some strong leadership in this area the cycle of poverty will simply be allowed to continue.

I want to talk about health care. When I looked at the section of the throne speech on health care, I quickly realized that one of the reasons this government cannot come up with comprehensive policies to deal with difficult issues is that it cannot even identify the issues. It is hard to believe the Minister of Health and the Premier have not yet clued into the fact that there is a very real health care crisis in this province.

1700

Let me help out the minister. There are endless delays in heart surgery, bed closures, transferring of patients needing special care such as neonatal to hospitals in the United States and people now planning for what they call their Mayo fund. Does the minister know what that is? That is where they set aside money not for the education of their children, not for their retirement, but for the time when they worry that they may need emergency health care. They do not believe any longer that it is going to be available for them in Ontario, so those who are fortunate to have those dollars are setting aside a nest egg so they can seek that help in the United States or some other jurisdiction.

They are all indications that there is a problem in the health care system. If the minister were to look into these matters, she would find one recurring issue, not the only one but a recurring one with a lot of the problems. It was mentioned by a number of colleagues in their remarks on this debate, and that is the critical shortage of nurses.

It would therefore, one would think, stand to reason that before this government could make claims to preserve quality health care in this province, it had better deal with the large number of nurses leaving this country to practise elsewhere, the dwindling number of people entering the profession and the many nurses who

are giving up the profession altogether and entering other fields.

If this government is going to preserve quality health care in Ontario, it must be able to provide a role for nurses in the health care system that will properly recognize their true contribution as health care professionals. This government cannot continue to ignore the tough political decisions that must be made. They cannot continue to jump from issue to issue, failing to deal with any of the real problems, glossing them over with vague policy pronouncements.

The government must remember that quality health care for many areas of this province, indeed for many areas of northern Ontario, still today is nonexistent. Distances to reach health care facilities, a lack of specialists and a lack of equipment are everyday realities in the north. This seems to be another problem that the Premier and the Minister of Health would like to forget about or gloss over. You have to wonder, I think, as you read the throne speech how these vague commitments to a number of initiatives to address certain problems in health care will, if at all, translate into actual, realistic government programs.

It cannot be very comforting for the patients and their families waiting for heart surgery to read the throne speech knowing that this government has still not been able to deliver on last year's commitments to some very modest improvements in cardiovascular services. The plain truth of the matter is that this is a government that simply does not appear to even know where to begin to manage a health care system. One third of the provincial budget, \$13 billion this year alone, is spent on health care, so the government must know, must realize the problems are not simply a matter of funding.

Mr Reycraft: And going up \$1 billion a year.

Mr Harris: It is going up \$1 billion a year. As long as the government looks at the structures in place, as long as it has incapable managers, obviously throwing billions more into that system that is not working is not going to be the solution. It is a matter of planning, it is a matter of management, it is a matter of competency, and competency particularly is something this government is very short on.

I want to say a positive thing, that the government has at least recognized one thing, that preventive medicine is a priority. It took five years. They need to focus health care direction on promoting disease prevention and healthier lifestyles.

Mr Reycraft: From 1985 to 1989 is four. We were in opposition five years ago. You were in power.

Mr Harris: Listen, the programs the government stopped five years ago, in that five-year gap, have left us so far behind. It is painfully apparent, as you read the throne speech, that although the government has identified it, it still has no specific initiatives to accomplish this.

There is, for example, no commitment to increase health and physical education programs in the schools to ensure that young people get off on the right foot. Yet there are test results that show conclusively that the majority of our young children today are physically unfit because of a lifestyle that is increasingly sedentary with television, computers, videos and video games.

There is no funding commitment for research into areas we know are actually shortening lives, such as stress. There is no commitment for funding to allow the health care professions to institute the advances that this type of research would make possible. The throne speech is deliberately silent on key issues currently dominating the health care policy field, like the nursing shortage and inadequate health care for northern Ontario. The government is deliberately silent, I suggest, for a reason. They do not know what to do about it. They do not have any solutions.

Their plans for this session are deliberately vague with statements like, "Fostering strong and supportive families and communities." They are going to foster that to deal with health care in this province. In truth that means absolutely nothing, nothing because this is a government that has no direction, that has no vision for the future. Whatever ministry you are talking about, it will not lay it out and will not work with those people, with the partners in delivering the programs, in a co-operative way to work out those policies to fit in with that vision.

When you do come up with one of the few parts of the throne speech that comes up with a specific announcement—there was one; that was the Cleantario lottery to deal with the environment—you start to realize, I think, how lucky we probably are that this government does not make many policy directions, that it does not have many and that it does not make many policy decisions. It is hard to imagine a government in this day and age—I think it is—that is not willing to pay for any of the pollution abatement necessary to keep Ontario clean.

They would rather try to tap into an already saturated lottery market to do the job. When the

Premier was asked about the tongue-in-cheek suggestion that we have a Kiddtario to provide lottery funds for education, the Premier said, "No, I don't believe lottery funding should be used for education." I guess he felt education was too important to leave to the whims of a lottery. That is what the Premier said. But he does not think the environment is that important. Does that add up? It does not add up to me.

What kind of a message is this sending out to the public? What next? If a business refuses to use equipment that is environmentally safe because of the cost, will the government offer to cut cards to see who will foot the bill? Our society must have an environmentally sound future. This means no one should do business in this province, whether it is farming, whether it is manufacturing, whether it is forestry operations or whether it is mining, at the expense of the environment.

I believe that we can no longer tolerate anything less than the absolutely best available technology. If we do not have the technology, then we must lead the way to develop it. Since this government is so devoid of ideas, let me propose to it the establishment of a board or an agency of environmental support and technology. Its mandate would be to develop and assist with the implementation of the best environmentally sound technology here in Ontario. If the best technology exists, it must be used. If it does not exist, then we must put the dollars into the research and development to make sure that it exists.

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We must recognize that if we want to become the cleanest environmental jurisdiction in the world, and I would think our citizens would want to do that, the cost of using the best available technology may from time to time put us or an industry at a competitive disadvantage with other jurisdictions if they have lower environmental standards. I believe this government should have a vehicle, a fund, an agency in place, that would, on behalf of all Ontarians, assist that company to equalize the disadvantage.

It ought not to be a choice of jobs or the environment. It ought not to be a choice of shutting down a plant or the environment. It ought to be that as a government with a vision, with a policy, if in fact that industry cannot compete because another jurisdiction is not as environmentally sensitive as we are, then we as Ontarians will all assist.

There is no doubt it would require substantial public sector, perhaps even private sector,

investment. Indeed it would require significant private sector investment, but I believe there are ways to pay for it. I never propose a new program or investment without telling the members how we can pay for it.

We have a large pool of industrial capital funding in place. The Ontario Development Corp, the Eastern Ontario Development Corp, the Northern Ontario Development Corp and the northern Ontario heritage fund represent an annual public sector investment of hundreds of millions of dollars, many of them wasted.

By tying environmental consideration to funding requirements, we could make millions of dollars available for competitive equalization and the development of new technology. We could indeed become the most environmentally conscious jurisdiction in the world.

We have \$1 billion in the existing and useless Premier's technology fund already linked to private-institution educational research and development. There are provincial and federal government industrial abatement programs coming on stream. These too could be designed to incorporate environmental considerations as a basis for assistance. Because we would be developing new technology, we would save on the costs of buying and importing. In fact, we would be able to sell and export our own technology.

We should be looking at being the leaders in the fastest-growing area in the whole world. Indeed, Taiwan alone—one little country—announced last year that in the next 10 years it was in the market to import \$20 billion worth of environmental technology for sewer, water and scrubbers. That is \$20 billion. Here is just one country that is telling the world: "We don't have the expertise. We don't have the technology. We want to buy it. We're serving notice. Who is going to fill our orders?"

It is surely the fastest-growing area in the world, and if the government wants to tap that market, we had better be doing the research and development here in Ontario. If the government wants to tap that market, we must be known here in Ontario as the most environmentally conscious jurisdiction in the world.

When you consider the social and health costs associated with environmental damage, when you consider the economic opportunities that could be created, when you consider our obligations to our children and the next generation, it is this kind of program, with this kind of vision, that I believe we must pursue. We cannot afford a government that seems to think that

cleaning up the environment is an option that we can entertain by purchasing a Cleantario ticket. This is just simply not good enough.

We can no longer afford this government's indecisiveness with respect to the waste management crisis, another tough issue this government refuses to deal with, another issue in which this government looks for somebody else to blame. We can no longer afford to wait for this government to take the necessary steps to clean up the environment. We must have mandatory recycling.

My government, my party, brought in recycling; we brought in the 4R program. What has happened in the four years? A couple of million dollars to expand it a little bit here. The time has come and gone when recycling should be mandatory in this province. We must improve our infrastructure.

The Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley) can repeat all the same old programs he wants, as he has done in this throne speech, but he still cannot swim at the beaches at home in St Catharines. They have been closed for some years now and remain closed. To open them would require improved, modernized infrastructure and stricter controls on industrial and municipal wastes. There is no mention of improving the infrastructure in this throne speech.

The throne speech says the Liberals "will continue to demonstrate leadership in environmental protection to ensure the quality of our air, water and food." The only leadership they have shown to date is in the quality and the quantity of their press releases. In the Environment ministry alone, Countdown Acid Rain, the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement and the ban on chlorofluorocarbons are still not in operation and will not be for several more years. In fact, the MISA program is already behind schedule, and I say to the Minister of the Environment and the Premier, this is not good enough.

I want to conclude with an item of finance, fiscal responsibility, fiscal control. In doing so, I want to read a couple of quotes. I want to read one from the chairman of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Donald Fullerton.

"Donald Fullerton today called for strong government action to reduce the federal deficit, declaring that the consequences of fiscal irresponsibility fall on lower- and middle-income Canadians, not on the rich. The recent strong appeals for control of government spending do not come from uncaring people; they come from people who do care, who want to ensure that the

needy and the ill will be taken care of in the future, not just today."

Fullerton also said—I want to go to this part because I do not want to read the whole letter—"Poor people, people on fixed incomes, retired people are the ones who suffer most from irresponsible fiscal management on the part of governments. We must accept the simple truth that sound financial management which minimizes inflation is the only way that middle- and lower-income Canadians"—in other words, the vast majority—"have any chance of improving their standard of living."

Fullerton said, and I want members to listen to this, "Canadians must convey to all levels of government that they can no longer act out of short-term expediency."

He described the national debt as the greatest challenge we have faced in the postwar era, and I agree with him. The debt at the federal level is indeed the biggest problem that Canadians face, but it is not just a Canadian problem. Indeed, as the largest province, far and away the biggest taxpayer to the federal government, this problem is Ontario's problem.

I believe the people of Ontario are tired of having one government blame the other government. I think they are tired of the provincial government saying: "The federal government won't do this for me" or the federal government saying, "Oh, that's the provincial government's responsibility." I think they accept and realize that this federal debt and deficit is indeed the biggest problem facing them. I do not think they are particularly happy with the provincial government's response: "We need more money from the federal government. They have to cost-share more programs. They have to be involved in this. We can't implement the Thomson report unless the federal government pays more. We can't deal with the infrastructure of sewer and water that is falling behind, and the roads, unless the federal government cost-shares more."

1720

The Ontario taxpayer says to himself: "Aren't I the biggest contributor to the federal deficit? Don't I pay most of that interest in this country? Why are the people in the provincial government not doing it themselves?" Surely, as an Ontario taxpayer, you have to say to yourself, "Gosh, isn't it cheaper if we do it ourselves rather than ask the government of Canada to do it for all of Canada?" We pay the bulk of that.

There is only one person who benefits when the federal government contributes more money for programs: the Treasurer; he benefits. But the

10 million taxpayers of Ontario who pay Ontario taxes are also the biggest taxpayers of the federal government and I believe the people of Ontario and the people of this country are beginning to understand that the federal debt is indeed that problem. I think they want municipal, school board and provincial jurisdictions to begin working with that government in helping to solve that problem, not against that government; whatever political party it is, whoever is in government at the time. Whether it is a Liberal government or Conservative government or, perish the thought, a socialist government at some time at the national level, we must work together to solve that problem.

The last thing I want to say that Mr Fullerton says is—

Mr D. R. Cooke: He's just a mouthpiece for the big banks.

Mr Harris: No, I think I am being very critical. I am going to go through the federal budget for members to show them where some of the problems are. I am saying that, as Canadians, those of here in Ontario have a vested interest in solving that problem and they are looking to us here as well to help solve that problem.

He says, "Now is the time for Canadians to demonstrate their support for government leaders who have the guts not only to tell it like it is but also to take the decisive action needed to protect the people whom they represent."

I do not see those guts here in this government of Ontario. I do not see it here at all.

What do I see here in Ontario? I see a federal government trying to control expenditures, having great difficulty doing it, not doing as good a job as many of us would like to see, trying to wrestle this massive problem that we all share under control. What is Ontario doing at the same time? It is announcing new program after new program, new spending after new spending. It is spending double and triple the rate of inflation. It has added 9,000 civil servants.

The cost of developing and administering programs and the metamorphosis of policies does not come cheap. Salaries, wages and benefits went from \$2.7 billion to \$3.6 billion. That is from 1985-86 to 1988-89. So the government spending is up about \$1 billion just in the cost of all these people who are dreaming up all these new ways to spend money.

I want to read to members something that I read as I flew down here on Monday. It was in the *enRoute* magazine that is in the Air Canada airplanes. It talks about Canada. It talks about the consequences "if Canada fails to curb its appetite

for borrowing; it may overtake some of the world's worst debtor nations."

This is an article by Diane Francis, who goes through a scenario of what will happen in the next 10 years if the federal debt is not brought under control. I do not want to read through it. I suggest to members that they should read it, but she concludes with this little scenario. She says:

"Am I being alarmist or is this possible? We exploit our wealth and yet debts grow exponentially. In 1976, Ottawa owed the equivalent of 22.4 per cent of the gross domestic product. By 1989, we owe 54 per cent of the gross domestic product. In 1988-89, the federal and provincial levels of government posted a total deficit of \$35 billion while the economy grew by \$49 billion.

"Then there is the dangerous trend towards foreign borrowing. By 1988, Canadian governments and corporations owed \$220 billion to foreigners. I want to put that in perspective. It is equivalent to 37.5 per cent of our gross domestic product. Brazilians, on the other hand, owed \$145 billion abroad, or 37 per cent of their gross domestic product. The difference is that, so far, foreigners continue to accept Canadian dollars as payment because our ability to repay is better than Brazil's."

How much longer do members think that will be the case, when we are now overtaking them in some of the foreign debt statistics; when we are now overtaking them in a number of those areas? How long do members think that will last?

Interjections.

Mr Harris: I appreciate the interjections because they encourage me to talk a little bit about how we got into this mess and why it is indeed all our responsibility, whether we are representatives here in the Legislature of Ontario or federal representatives. It is important that we understand how we got into the mess.

In 1968, program expenditures at the federal government level—this is the federal budget and this is one of the budget papers that I am reading. It is very appropriate to this throne speech, to this government and to the upcoming provincial budget, because we are going to see the problem they got into and how they got into it at the federal level, and we can see and equate that to what is happening here in Ontario.

Program expenditures—this is the amount of spending that went into programs. These are the government promises: "We promise you we'll do this and that for you; we can deliver all this"—cost \$10.8 billion. In 1984-85, 16 years later, 16 years of control, virtually uninterrupted, by

Pierre Elliott Trudeau, it was \$86.7 billion. It was up 800 per cent in that period of time.

What else happened in that period of time? How did we get to this situation of a massive increase in the government bureaucracy, of the massive government spending of the new programs? We got into it by doing this. This is what happened in Ottawa through that period of time. I am very, very quickly going to go through the years.

Inflation from 1968 to 1969 was three per cent. This is spending just on programs, not on interest. Spending went up 13 per cent, four times the rate of inflation that year. The next year—I am into 1970 now—there was 2.8 per cent inflation; spending was up 12.5 per cent. The next year, inflation was 4.8 per cent; spending was up 16 per cent. The next year, inflation was 7.6 per cent; spending was up 16 per cent.

Most of us would expect government to keep pace with inflation in its programs. There could be a one per cent or two per cent growth when you average it out in the increase in the number of people and in the level of activity; but triple, quadruple, double the rate of inflation cumulatively? What happens? We will see.

Inflation was up to 10.9 per cent in 1973-74; spending was up 18 per cent, almost double the rate of inflation. In 1974-75, inflation was up 10.8 per cent; spending was up 30 per cent.

I want to put these years into perspective because the 30 per cent increase in spending in one year was John Turner's last hurrah. You can tell, when you look at these spending increases, who was Minister of Finance.

In the next year, spending increased 20 per cent; inflation was 7.5 per cent.

There are three interesting years in here. Let the members tell me if they can guess who was Finance minister in these years. Inflation was eight per cent; spending was up only 7.7 per cent. Inflation was nine per cent; spending was up only 9.8 per cent. Inflation was nine per cent; spending was up only 7.7 per cent.

In 1976, 1977, 1978 and 1979, who was Finance minister in those years? Donald Macdonald, the only conservative Finance minister those rascals had in Ottawa in those three years. The only one, the one guy who said: "We've got a problem here. We must solve this problem. We must try and come to grips with it and if we do it now, 10 years from now it won't be massively out of control."

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Those were the years, 1979 and 1980, and I applaud Donald Macdonald. But where is he

now? The Liberals could not tolerate him. They said: "No, we've got to spend our way into oblivion. Out of my sight, Donald Macdonald. We don't care to be responsible."

Mr Smith: Michael's increasing the deficit.

Interjections.

Mr Harris: I am talking about spending. I think it is important the members listen to how one gets into this problem. They might learn something and their constituents might appreciate it, because they have not demonstrated much ability to do it in their first few years here.

The Acting Speaker (Mr M. C. Ray): Order, please. It would be helpful if the members paid regard to the person who has the floor, the member for Nipissing.

Mr Harris: In 1979-80, inflation was 10 per cent and spending was only up 5.8 per cent. What happened then? Joe Clark was around then. Crosbie was around then. They brought in the spending for that year. Do members know what happened to the budget? The Liberals came in and said: "Well, we're not going to pay for it. We're not going to increase the taxes even to pay for that." But that was the year that spending came down.

You had Donald Macdonald. You had, unfortunately for too short a time, a conservative who said, "We must get our spending under control." Then we came back with a majority Liberal government with Pierre Elliott Trudeau again and what did we see happening? Inflation 12 per cent; spending 15 per cent. Inflation 10 per cent; spending 16 per cent. Inflation 5.8 per cent; spending 20 per cent. Inflation up 4.4 per cent; spending up 10 per cent. Inflation up four per cent; spending up 11 per cent.

In those five years, the debt really went out of control. They had a chance back in 1978, 1979, 1980, but in those five years inflation was up cumulatively 43 per cent and spending was up 93 per cent. It got out of control. That is what was inherited by Michael Wilson.

What has Michael Wilson done in spending in his five years? To give members the seriousness and magnitude of the problem and the debt going up every year, they must appreciate how serious this problem is. Here is what Michael Wilson did in spending in his first year: Inflation 4.1 per cent; spending down one per cent. On programs, down one per cent.

Mr Sola: How much did he spend?

Mr Harris: Not inflation. This is the spending: down one per cent. Add that to the amount they spent on interest, it was up, but I am talking

about program spending, how you get into trouble as a government.

The next year, inflation up 4.2 per cent; he increased spending 4.5 per cent. Next year, inflation four per cent; he increased spending 7.55 per cent. I suggest, and I do not do it in a complimentary way, that it was getting closer to an election and they spent more than they should have. In 1988-89, inflation up four per cent; federal spending up 3.6 per cent; and this last budget, inflation projected at 4.6 per cent and spending up 3.6 per cent.

So in the five years previously, we had the Liberals blow it all out of proportion. They were spending double and a half the rate of inflation, and the debt in those five years doubled; it went from \$44 billion to \$86 billion in those five years.

This is the massive problem they inherited. You get into it by spending double and triple the rate of inflation, by promising new programs. For a year or two you can hike taxes to pay for them. For a year or two, you can borrow in the years you do not want to hike taxes; but you cannot cumulatively over 16 years or 17 years do it without leaving this legacy.

There is the Conservative government. Inflation in its five-year budgets now has been 23 per cent; it has increased spending 19 per cent; it has not kept up to the rate of inflation to try and wrestle this problem under control; it has hiked taxes to try and wrestle this problem under control. As the members are all quick to point out, it is not under control yet. The debt is still going up.

What are we doing to help? We are calling on the federal government to spend more money. What are we as a provincial government doing to help? We are saying: "You've got to spend more, we can't do it." What are we doing as a province, compared to Michael Wilson who is trying to wrestle his spending under control? In nearly five years, with inflation up 23 per cent, the federal government is spending close to 50 per cent; it is spending two, two and a half and three times the rate of inflation. As a province we cannot afford to keep these rascals around very much longer.

Not only do they not recognize the problem at the federal level; not only are they not willing to co-operate to clean up the lousy mess that was left by 17 years of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, but they in Ontario are doing the same things, starting out the same way he did 17 years ago. They have not learned. They not only are not part of a solution, they are indeed a major part of the problem.

I want to give others an opportunity to comment on this debate. I simply want to point

out to the members that, on the fiscal side, in the conclusion of that part, after five years of record economic growth, people are saying to me: "Where is the money going? We do not understand. What is happening? We know they have lots of money. Are they just lousy managers? Are they throwing it away? Are they wasting it? Is it misguided? Is it misdirected? Are they promising a whole host of new things that we cannot afford and we cannot pay for?" I tell people: "Yes, all of the above."

I also tell the members that people are sick and tired of governments' blaming one another. They are looking to Queen's Park because this is our jurisdiction—they are looking to Ottawa, too—for governments to start working together to solve the problems that we face as a country and indeed as a province.

I repeat that we in the opposition must try to get the government to change its ways in the interests of this province and this country, and we will continue to do that in a responsible fashion. We will continue to point out where the government does not have to spend all the money it is wasting; where it is wasting dollars and managing them effectively; that it has no game plan, no vision as to where it wants to go and no policies designed on how to get there. But by golly, we cannot afford to have it go on the way it has been going for another four or five years. If it does not change, we will take that message to the people at the first opportunity.

Mr Fleet: It was really quite intriguing—interesting is the word the Treasurer frequently uses—to hear comments from the member for Nipissing. It is really quite amazing because the deficit has been cut every single year of Liberal government in Ontario. The member for Nipissing did not focus on what we were doing in Ontario but rather on the past, where his views are firmly fixed.

We have cut the deficit regularly. We have never denied that spending has gone up. Of course there was an awful lot we had to make up for, with the years of underfunding or starvation in the fields of education, social services—

Hon Mr Riddell: Education, health and social services.

Mr Fleet: I am being assisted by the honourable Minister of Agriculture and Food and quite properly so.

The fact of the matter is that every day in the House the third party calls for more spending just about everywhere in every conceivable program, never bothering to specify what is now supposed

to be cut. The problem is that we have been quite effective managers.

Moreover, in the last election—unlike the federal Conservatives in their last election—we did not go through and say that one issue was really important and then come out and say that something else, like a deficit, was the order of the day, in order to abandon our campaign promises. We have been fulfilling our promises. We have said there are needs and we are addressing them as best we conceivably can. In fact, that is exactly what the budget process will show again as the budget comes out in a little over a week.

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What is really quite amazing, frankly, is that the hypocrisy that comes forward from the third party from time to time does not get more publicity. I guess we have been a little too kind in not drawing everyone's attention to it, but they cannot realistically expect to call for more spending all the time, then at the same time complain we are cutting the spending and never, ever provide any specifics about anything. That is the politics of negativism. I suspect it will lead them to a third-place finish again, if they continue it.

Mr Pouliot: I am always very pleased to listen to, and I almost hang on every word put forward by, the member for Nipissing, but members will forgive me if for a moment this afternoon I thought, with high respect, that I was dealing with an imposter. The speech was made for the House of Commons. Clearly a statement of apology is to follow the headline in the business section, "Sorry For the Pain this Budget Causes." Bad news travels quickly; people become apologists.

I would perhaps be amused if the situation were not so sad. When you notice the ping-pong, the back and forth, the acquiescing, the omissions of yesteryear, the refusal to listen to Kenneth Carter, loopholes that were created under the reign of John Turner when he was the Minister of Finance, I for one do not now begrudge the fact that our great party never got to spend any money. The future can last a long time. It usually does indeed. Maybe one day our time will come and we will be able to affect the fundamentals. Some of my distinguished colleagues, as opposed to saying "A curse on both your houses," will restore the kind of fiscal justice that is so badly needed.

Until that time, until we affect the fundamentals and create a fair system of justice whereby everyone pays his fair share of taxes, we will continue to be the victims of this kind of

ping-pong game as opposed to going to where the fundamentals should be and addressing the tax system in this country.

Mr Neumann: I was not surprised, but a little disturbed, to hear the ongoing conflicting messages we hear from the third party. The member for Nipissing characteristically went on in his ideologically fixed way about cutting spending and getting the deficit down. What is surprising is that the members around him in his caucus do not seem to listen to that, because we constantly hear them day after day in this House criticizing our cabinet ministers for not spending more money in areas of health care, schools and roads. You name it, they are up on their feet asking for more money to be spent in a variety of areas. These are areas of need, areas that were neglected prior to the present government taking office in 1985. Our Treasurer has handled things in a fiscally responsible manner.

We do not have a deficit in Ontario on our operating budget. The entire cost of the goods-and-services delivery of this government is carried by the revenue coming in. We are paying the bills as we go along. Indeed, there is a surplus. Some of that surplus is used for capital expenditure on roads, schools and hospitals, which the previous government neglected. It created a deficit in facilities and infrastructure which the Liberal government is meeting with some of the surplus we create from our operating budget.

Certainly we continue to borrow money for some of that capital expenditure, but it is only to make up for the deficit in facilities and infrastructure that party created. I am tired of hearing their contradictory views, saying, "Spend more, spend less, spend more, spend less." They should get their act together over there in the Conservative Party.

Mr Faubert: The member for Lake Nipigon (Mr Pouliot) somehow picks one aspect. I guess his strategy is that the best defence is offence. He was offensive enough in stating that somehow the statement here in the throne speech which says—

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Pouliot: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: With a great deal of reluctance, my distinguished friend does not have the chance or the courage to get up too often, but I would like to kindly remind him that he is to answer the words of wisdom from the member for Nipissing and not to make an uncalled-for attack on the member for Lake Nipigon.

Mr Faubert: It is the member for Nipissing. My apologies to the member for Lake Nipigon.

This statement says that progress in the area will require the financial support and co-operation of all levels of government and the community at large. This is not a copout, with all due respect, and I think every member of this House knows that.

The member for Nipissing tries to use attack as the best defence, because he suddenly gets off in the area of trying to apologize for the Tory federal government's budget, for some reason calling that an attack on the deficit. I would like to point out that the people of Ontario are actually going to feel it, because this is the heartland of Canada and this budget of the federal government is a direct attack on the lower- and middle-income earners of this good province.

I would like to point out too that not only has the federal government failed to bring in a budget that sets a fiscal example, but it is really soft on debt reduction. Indeed, the deficit does not decline and there is no impact on the budget. Indeed, what they have done is—

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. Order, please. The member for Nipissing has two minutes to respond.

Mr Harris: Briefly, to the member for Lake Nipigon, I agree with him wholeheartedly in his comment. I do not begrudge for one instant the fact that his party has never been in power either.

To the member for High Park-Swansea (Mr Fleet) who talks about the deficit being reduced year after year, people cannot understand—I guess we are into about the seventh year of economic growth—why the total debt is getting higher and higher here in the province each year. For the life of me, they do not understand that. They say to me: “What happens when tougher times come along? How are we going to have the capacity for that?”

The member for Brantford (Mr Neumann) talked about how we finance all our operating. We only borrow and accumulate this massive debt for capital purposes. He does not talk about how the plant is depreciating rapidly underneath this government; significantly, I might add.

I would like to point out that members of this governing party talk about the underfunding in the past and how they have to correct this underfunding. There were far fewer portables in the past. If they were underfunded so badly, why do they tell us the problem is worse today? There were no waiting lists in the past like there are now. If the underfunding was so bad, why is the problem worse today?

Summer jobs were available for students all over the province. Home ownership was still a realistic dream for people in Ontario. Young people still had the dream that there was a future for them in Ontario. Increasingly, they are wondering and concerned about the future in David Peterson's Ontario.

So in spite of those recessionary periods—

The Acting Speaker: Time. Thank you.

Miss Nicholas: I will begin my comments today and hopefully finish off tomorrow and have an opportunity to speak on the speech from the throne.

We have a number of good initiatives in this throne speech. I think it is a very focused agenda that we have. When I read news reports that there was not much in the throne speech and not much about anything, I went through this throne speech point by point and I considered how it affected my riding of Scarborough Centre. I was very much impressed with what I had collected as I read through it and how important it is going to be to my constituents and, in fact, to the people of Ontario. I would like to reflect over the next few minutes on how it does affect my constituents and the riding of Scarborough Centre.

1750

I was interested the other day when I heard the member for Brantford (Mr Neumann) talk about VCR. I had only known a VCR to be a video machine that you sometimes watch in the confines of your home. You watch a movie that maybe has been rerun a few times. But he made VCR very pertinent to this agenda. He talked about vision, commitment and results.

I listened intently to him and it really struck me that that was a very true caption of this particular throne speech. I thank the member for Brantford for that very insightful alternative to the motto VCR. Now we know it means vision, commitment and results and it relates to this throne speech that we had just last week here in the Legislature.

We have six points that have been focused on for this particular throne speech, and I would like to just go over each of them as it affects my riding. The first one is economic development, new markets for our goods and services being the aim of our economic development. Would it not be nice to see in Europe, everywhere around the world, the words “Made in Canada” on products and goods? Would it not be nice to be away from your homeland and pick up an item and think, “Isn't that a lovely little item? Maybe I will take that home,” and notice that it says “Made in Canada”?

I think our vision of economic development is a good one. Through that, we are looking at improving education, training and adjustment programs, which means on-the-job training. I think this is absolutely fabulous. There have been many people who have come into my office and said they wish that they could get on-the-job training, that more people would offer it, because they were not in the position of being able to go back to school. They had a family, they could not get away from work and go back to school, and yet they wanted to advance within their company, within their range of possibilities, within their career choice.

On-the-job training is the way we can do that. We get training on the job. We are being paid for it and we are learning a new role and how to move up within the company or the organization in which we are working. I think we should strive to encourage on-the-job training, and that is what this throne speech does.

We are also looking at literacy, the ability to read and understand what is being read. I was surprised at the number of people in Ontario, in this fine province of ours, who are illiterate and unable to conduct business by reading and writing in the way that we consider acceptable. I know that Frontier College offers a number of these programs, and there are a number of people who are just dying to learn but are perhaps a bit embarrassed at the age of 45 or 50 to admit that they went through the school system and are still unable to read or comprehend the written language, who lack the ability to read to their children at night something other than nursery rhymes that they remembered from their own childhood.

Literacy is a very important factor, and it comes within the economic development. It is so important that we have the ability to communicate, each and every one of us in Ontario and in Canada. I think this throne speech gives the commitment to literacy for everyone in Ontario.

The second area of the throne speech was education, improving the quality of education. We have been striving for this for many years. I know in my own personal experience of going through the school system that there were many changes in my 20 years in it. I remember how structured it was from kindergarten through to grade 6. There was discipline, there were the basic learning skills and then, all of a sudden in grades 7 and 8, there was the open complex.

You were to teach yourself. You were self-instructed. It left those who were unable to learn on their own wandering. I saw that they

were really disadvantaged by the new school system that was introduced. It was great for the self-learners but not so good for those who were unable to teach themselves. Then we went into the high school system, and it was closed up again.

There is a necessity to get back to the basic learning skills, the basic social skills. We have to learn how to get the basics before we can get into anything fancier and more nondirected. My father was a teacher for over 20 years and he always emphasized that the basic skills were the most important ones and that we should be emphasizing those, in the time I was at school. I know he reinforced them when I went home at night in case I had not learned them at school.

The throne speech provides for funding all day—for half-day junior kindergarten and for senior kindergarten. There are a lot of schools that do not provide that. I know I benefitted from junior kindergarten and senior kindergarten, from full-time senior kindergarten as a matter of fact, so I can say in truth that I think I benefitted from it and I am glad people in my constituency are going to be able to benefit from it as well.

Then there is going to be the funding for full-time, full-day senior kindergarten where classroom space permits. Whereas we see that in some of the growth regions, they do not have the classroom space available to provide that kind of alternative, there are places where there are empty classrooms and these are going to be used for students who are interested in taking full-time kindergarten.

There are many who perhaps will not want to take advantage of this. As parents, they may choose to have their children home in the afternoon or to keep them in a day care program they may feel is a little bit better for their child, but there is the opportunity, for those who wish it, to have full-time senior kindergarten. I think it is a great alternative and I am sure many people will choose this as an alternative.

Many people are saying: "Oh, it is an alternative to day care. We are educating them instead of putting them in day care." But there was an early primary education report that said there was a necessity for providing a strong developmental foundation in the early years as a requisite for more formal schooling. It also highlighted the need for stronger linkages between day care and education. I fully support these initiatives that have been undertaken to improve the quality of education and I also very strongly support the grades 7, 8 and 9 options that there are going to be.

So often, we were forced at grade 7 to choose what it was we wanted to be when we grew up. Quite often, we may choose before we develop interests in other areas. What is it we want to do when we are five years old? I know I had a number of things on my mind, and they changed when I was 10 years old and 15 years old, and they are still changing now. I think we should give a person an opportunity to get his basic skills and then to explore the options that are open to him. I very fully support getting the basics in there, not forcing our children to choose their course of employment too early in life. We can always make a decision, but we should not be forced to be make a decision sooner than we have to.

The third area in the throne speech was "Social Assistance: Moving from Dependence to Self-Reliance." This is such an important point. I think many people have not reviewed this carefully. If they did, they would see how significant a point this is. There has been an increased need in social assistance over the last few years. They have studied the effects it has on the learning ability of children going to school when they are hungry.

I have had the opportunity to visit many of the breakfast clubs that are provided in our Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority facilities. I have had the opportunity to fry five pounds of bacon, along with people who are providing eggs and toast and cereal, for children who otherwise

would start their day hungry, who would be unable to learn throughout the day because they were too hungry, who were severely hampered by their inability to have sufficient food and cannot think throughout the day.

I think these are great initiatives, but we must do more. We have to move to self-sufficiency. They cannot depend on this for ever. That is what Transitions is about and that is what the throne speech was about: supporting efforts to move to self-sufficiency.

The honourable member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr Faubert) and myself just two weeks ago had an opportunity to meet with many constituents in a forum. We had the opportunity to hear their presentations about the value of the Transitions report and how it could be effective in their community and across Ontario. One such person told us about his situation, about how he went out and worked, and together with his social assistance it turned out he would lose \$10 at the end of the week. There was no incentive to go out to work.

I think it is important that we reflect on this particular program and the fact that the throne speech is helping these individuals. I hate to rush this very important topic. Perhaps I could continue tomorrow.

On motion by Miss Nicholas, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 1800.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

- Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)
 Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)
 Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)
 Beer, Charles (York North L)
 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)
 Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)
Bradley, Hon James J., Minister of the Environment (St Catharines L)
 Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breaugh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)
 Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)
 Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)
Caplan, Hon Elinor, Minister of Health (Orillia L)
 Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)
 Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
 Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)
 Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)
 Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)
Conway, Hon Sean G., Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)
 Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)
 Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)
 Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)
Curling, Hon Alvin, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)
 Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)
 Dietsch, Michael M. (St Catharines-Brock L)
Eakins, Hon John F., Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)
Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A., Speaker (Perth L)
 Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)
Elston, Hon Murray J., Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L)
 Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)
 Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)
 Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)
 Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)
 Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)
 Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)
 Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)
Fontaine, Hon René, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)
Fulton, Hon Ed, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)
Grandmaitre, Hon Bernard C., Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)
 Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)
 Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)
 Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)
 Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)
 Hart, Christine E. (York East L)
 Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)
Hošek, Hon Chaviva, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)
 Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Kanter, Ron (St Andrew-St Patrick L)
Kerrio, Hon Vincent G., Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)
 Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)
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 McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)
 McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)
 McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)
 McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)
 McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)
McLeod, Hon Lyn, Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)
 Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

- Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste Marie NDP)
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)
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Nixon, Hon Robert F., Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics (Brant-Haldimand L)
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 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)
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 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)
Patten, Hon Richard, Minister of Government Services (Ottawa Centre L)
 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)
Peterson, Hon David R., Premier and President of the Council and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (London Centre L)
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)
Phillips, Hon Gerry, Minister of Citizenship (Scarborough-Agincourt L)
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott and Russell L)
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)
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 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-Walkerville L)
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)
 Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)
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 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)
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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Second Session, 34th Parliament

Wednesday, 10 May 1989

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, 10 May 1989

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr Mackenzie: On 1 May, Larry Newfeld, an employee of Canadian Pacific Forest Products in Dryden and a member of Canadian Paperworkers Union Local 1323, was killed on the job. This was the third death of a member of the Canadian Paperworkers Union on the job in 11 days, the 10th death in less than the last two years. It underlines an appalling and totally inadequate record of this Minister of Labour (Mr Sorbara) as far as health and safety in the workplace is concerned.

The Canadian Paperworkers Union has asked for an urgent meeting with the Minister of Labour and representatives of the health and safety branch. They have specifically asked the minister to immediately set up a public task force to conduct an investigation into the occupational health and safety procedures in the pulp and paper industry with an early date to report back. If this minister gives a darn about the workers, he will respond positively and forthwith. He has not as yet responded to the wire of a number of days ago requesting this meeting as the result of the rash of deaths that have occurred in the industry. Surely enough is enough in terms of death in the workplace in Ontario.

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Mr Eves: I would like to rise today and comment on a situation with respect to Highway 69 from Waubesaushene to Sudbury, Ontario, and the four-laning of the same. We had a delegation—the member for Nickel Belt (Mr Laughren) attended and the member for Muskoka-Georgian Bay (Mr Black) was invited—with the minister on 9 January 1989.

Municipal leaders and provincial representatives sat down with the Minister of Transportation (Mr Fulton) and impressed upon him the need to do something about four-laning Highway 69, not only from an economy standpoint but, more important, from a safety standpoint. Everybody at the meeting was left with the

impression that the minister was going to get back to us in due course with a proposed phase-in program of four-laning Highway 69.

Needless to say, I was somewhat surprised when a representative from the Ministry of Transportation appeared at the District of Parry Sound Municipal Association meeting on 10 April 1989 and informed us that there were no immediate plans with respect to Highway 69, despite the fact that the minister had told us that it was "a high priority" with him and his ministry.

I think this type of double standard certainly does not serve the people of northern Ontario, not just the people in the riding of Parry Sound, very well. I urge the minister to reconsider or clear up the inconsistencies between what he has to say and what representatives of his ministry have to say.

SCARBOROUGH GENERAL HOSPITAL CHAIRMAN'S AWARDS

Miss Nicholas: It seems appropriate that during Nurses Week I have an opportunity to recognize three winners of the Scarborough General Hospital's Chairman's Awards, presented to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the hospital's growth and development.

This year, more than 150 nominations were received for the awards. Chosen were nurse Joyce Hird, Allan Greve and Dr David Naiberg.

Nurse Joyce Hird is the manager of nursing practice for special clinic services. She has worked at Scarborough General Hospital since 1966 and has dedicated many hours to providing excellent patient care. Allan Greve has been the hospital's executive director for the past five years. Dr David Naiberg is chief of ear, nose and throat specialists and director of the hospital's ear institute. He is credited with developing Canada's first telephone hearing screening test, a free public service that has already been used by more than 45,000 people.

All three are dedicated to providing superb health care, but there are many more nurses and doctors who are contributing time and effort to the success of our health care system.

This week being Nurses Week, I urge members to reflect on the nurses who have made a

valuable contribution to their lives. They should just think of the role of a nurse, those who have made a difference when they have been sick, those who have looked after their friends and family, or members of their families who are nurses.

I thank the nurses for their hard work.

CANCER TREATMENT

Miss Martel: Further to the announcement made by the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) in Sudbury on Monday, I want to express my grave concern that nothing has been done to address the present recruitment problem facing Laurentian Hospital's oncology department.

Any announcement relating to the cancer treatment centre, especially one reannounced in Sudbury, should have dealt positively with the issue of foreign-trained graduates. It is incomprehensible to me that the Minister of Health has neglected to act on this matter.

The situation regarding Dr Anthony Ho is well known to the Minister of Health. Dr Ho, a clinical scientist, is an ideal candidate to head the research centre in Sudbury. He was the only applicant who responded when this position was advertised across Canada in September 1987. The oncology program will be dealt a severe blow if the barriers established by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario are not removed to allow Dr Ho a temporary licence to practise here.

Under section 3 of the Health Disciplines Act, "It is the duty of the minister to ensure that the activities of health disciplines are effectively regulated and co-ordinated in the public interest." The minister has the power to ensure Dr Ho does not have to endure all of the hoops set out by the college. Unless this is done, the research centre will go nowhere and the morale within the oncology department will go downhill. The minister must respond immediately to this situation.

PENETANGUISHENE MENTAL HEALTH CENTRE

Mr McLean: My statement is for the Minister of Health. Approximately 15 months ago, she stood up in this Legislature and said the complete redevelopment of the Oak Ridge division of the Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre was a priority with her and her ministry.

This facility was built on a prison model in 1933, when this province's mentally ill were tucked away, out of sight and out of mind. We are supposed to be treating these people now, but

this facility has not kept up with this philosophy. An eight-year, \$3.2-million renovation program that got under way in 1987 will not make a hospital out of a jail by putting new plaster on the walls, new curtains on the windows or new carpets on the floors. This is only a Band-Aid renovation; it is only a stopgap measure to hold this antiquated facility together until a new 300-bed Oak Ridge is built.

The minister recently made a commitment to build a new Oak Ridge. It took a work-to-rule campaign by Oak Ridge staff to prompt her into making this commitment, but she failed to tell anyone when construction will get under way. I am afraid this promise will end up on the growing list of broken promises from her government. That list includes increased education funding, lower automobile insurance rates and maintaining a common pause day. I guess we can add Oak Ridge to the list.

1340

BOB RUMBALL CENTRE FOR THE DEAF

Mr J. B. Nixon: I rise today to officially recognize the 10th anniversary of the Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf, which is located in the riding of York Mills at 2395 Bayview Avenue. The centre was officially opened 5 April 1979 and at that time the cost was \$7.3 million, funded by the government of Ontario, the deaf themselves and donations from churches, service clubs, corporations, charitable foundations and concerned citizens.

Bob Rumball has dedicated his life to serving the needs of the deaf. I recently toured the Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf and was very impressed with the variety of services and facilities, including housing, which are available. The centre's comprehensive facility is unique within the western world.

Today, with our emphasis on multiculturalism, we sometimes forget that the deaf themselves are a unique community. Lack of communication in a hearing society creates serious problems for many deaf people. It can mean the loss of social interaction and isolation from information, education, recreation, vocational rehabilitation and human contact. Their skills all too often remain undeveloped and their contribution to society untapped, largely because of the lack of understanding by the hearing community of the unique problems, attributes and nature of the deaf community.

The Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf provides an opportunity for the deaf and professionally

trained people to work together to bridge the gap and open doors of opportunity to a fuller life. I congratulate all who have been involved with the Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf upon its 10th anniversary.

LABOUR DISPUTE

Mr Allen: For almost a month now, the staff at the children's aid society and the Catholic children's aid society in Hamilton have been on strike. I appreciate the minister's desire to keep strikes in the agencies at arm's length, yet at the same time he is always the hidden presence, as is the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon), at the bargaining table.

The major problem faced in both these CASs is that the staffing capacity, as a result of the budgets, is such that, for example, a staff person writes, "Members already work a lot of hours and are expected to fill emergency after-hours service on a rotating basis, which means one week you are working 24 hours a day from Monday to Friday."

It is that kind of overwork—overtime, extended hours—that creates the stress that has put the pressure on these workers and forced them to go out on strike. I ask the minister and the government to look closely at their funding transfers, which are the root of this problem.

VISITOR

The Speaker: That completes the allotted time for members' statements. Just before I recognize another member, I would like to inform the House that today we have Ramon Menezes, the international secretary of the FSLN of Nicaragua, in the lower gallery. Please welcome Mr Menezes.

ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr Offer: Mr Speaker, I request unanimous approval to recognize Israel's Independence Day.

Agreed to.

Mr Offer: I rise today to acknowledge a special anniversary; 41 years ago, on 14 May 1948, the modern state of Israel was established. While small in size, Israel's place in the world is of great significance, and today, as Jewish people around the world mark this day, we are all reminded of how this country represents freedom and democracy.

I would like to draw the members' attention to the gallery, where leaders of our Jewish community are present today. I would like to especially

acknowledge Benjamin Abileah, the consul general of Israel.

This day is of added significance to this Legislature, as we have a committee on the issue of Soviet Jewry. This all-party committee is co-chaired by myself, the member for Markham (Mr Cousens) and the member for Hamilton West (Mr Allen), and is one supported by this Legislature. Our purpose is to bring forward the plight of the Soviet Jew, who does not have the freedom which we in this province and country all too often just take for granted in our ordinary way of life. We work together to bring this issue to light and work with many others to pave the way for the emigration of the Soviet Jew.

This issue is important and vital. It is important and vital that we have a state of Israel which is independent to serve as a home to these persons and others persons around the world.

I have the great honour and it gives me great pleasure to read a proclamation signed by the Premier (Mr Peterson) and the minister responsible for multiculturalism (Mr Phillips). It reads as follows:

"Whereas the province of Ontario and the Canadian nation have prospered through the courage, dedication and industry of many people of many nationalities and religions who have come to this land in search of freedom and opportunity; and

"Whereas we especially value the important contributions made by our citizens of Jewish heritage since first arriving in Canada in 1759; and

"Whereas the free, united, independent and democratic state of Israel was established 41 years ago on 14 May 1948; and

"Whereas it is imperative for Canadians to remember the price of our precious freedom is eternal vigilance; and

"Whereas the observance of this anniversary fosters within us a deeper appreciation of freedom, liberty and democratic ideals in our multicultural society;

"Therefore, on behalf of the people of Ontario, we are pleased to recognize 10 May 1989 as Israeli Independence Day, and we commend its observance to all the people of this province."

Mr B. Rae: I am delighted to be able to rise in my place and celebrate, together with all the members of this assembly, this day which rings with such significance for the Israeli people and indeed for the Jewish community in the Diaspora around the world.

This year, like every other year since 1948, is a year that is full of both peril and opportunity for

the people of Israel and for the state of Israel. We celebrate today not only the independence of Israel but the friendship between our people, the Canadian people, and the Israeli people. We celebrate, as well, Canada's involvement with peacekeeping as a member of the United Nations and the fact that there are so many bonds between our two countries.

Of course, on this day, we celebrate the remarkable contribution of the Jewish people to the life of our country and of our province and the community which with its richness, its diversity, its vibrancy has added so much to the culture, the way of life, the happiness and wellbeing and sense of justice of this country of ours. And so on this day, it is indeed a celebration, even as we recognize the tremendous challenges facing all of us as we struggle to find peace in the Middle East.

Peace with security has to be a common objective which we hope will unite all governments, indeed all peoples who live in the Middle East, and it is important for us to reflect on that even as we celebrate today the commemoration of 14 May 1948 in the presence of Mr Abileah and members of the Jewish community who are here today.

Mr Cousens: I am pleased to rise on behalf of our party, on behalf of our leader and as one of the co-chairmen of the Soviet Jewry committee of the Ontario Legislature, to speak on this very important day.

It marks the 41st anniversary of the founding of the state of Israel. Following the Second World War and the horrors of the Holocaust, the centuries-old dream of a Jewish state came true and Israel became a reality.

We reflect on the difficulties which Israel has endured over the past 40 years in order to maintain its identity. The country's strength has been in the commitment of its people to build a secure future, and its strength relies as well upon the continuing support of all of us who recognize Israel's continuing contribution to freedom and to history.

May is both a month of celebration and a month of solemn remembrance for the Jewish people; 2 May was Holocaust Remembrance Day commemorating the more than six million Jews who perished under the Nazi regime in the Second World War. Today is an enjoyable and happy occasion, but those who did not survive to see the establishment of a Jewish homeland must not be forgotten. May they be commemorated by the ancient Jewish Passover greeting: Next year in Jerusalem.

1350

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

CARDIOVASCULAR CARE

Hon Mrs Caplan: I am pleased to inform the House that today I am announcing the second in a series of steps in our province-wide action plan for specialty health care. As outlined in the recent throne speech, we believe that everyone in Ontario is entitled to quality health care, regardless of his ability to pay. We are committed to this objective.

Cardiovascular care is one of several areas identified in the throne speech on which the ministry is concentrating its resources. The other areas are cancer care, emergency and trauma services, dialysis and lithotripsy, AIDS and care for mothers and newborn infants. I announced an expansion of cancer services in the form of a province-wide breast screening program on Monday.

Today's announcements are part of the initiatives to strengthen the province-wide cardiac care network being developed in response to the recommendations contained in the St Michael's Hospital report.

In order to strengthen cardiac services for residents of northern Ontario, I am announcing today that Sudbury Memorial Hospital, the province's northeastern centre for cardiac care, will receive \$2 million. This money will be used to expand its diagnostic facilities and enable it to handle an increased case load.

Sunnybrook Medical Centre in Toronto will receive \$1.5 million in operating funds for the cardiovascular unit being developed there.

I am also pleased to announce that my ministry will provide \$250,000 for the province-wide working group on cardiovascular care, \$160,000 for computerization of the Metropolitan Toronto cardiovascular triage and registry program and \$300,000 for development of the registry province-wide.

Earlier today in London, I also announced the following increases in funding: University Hospital in London will receive \$2.3 million to fund an expansion of services, enabling more procedures to be carried out; Victoria Hospital in London will receive \$1 million to increase angioplasties and paediatric heart surgery cases.

Hospitals, of course, can fulfil only so many needs, and that is why health promotion and disease prevention are so very important as a part of our program. One of our most successful initiatives in this area is the health promotion grants program. Therefore, I am pleased to

announce that we will spend an additional \$1 million for health promotion grants, of which \$500,000 will be specifically directed towards cardiovascular health.

Before closing, I want to acknowledge my colleague the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr Kwinter) and his announcement yesterday that the Premier's Council technology fund will provide \$2.8 million to the Ottawa Heart Institute. This is a generous and welcome contribution to heart research in Ontario. I am confident it will make a major contribution to heart expertise and knowledge in this province.

In the weeks ahead, I will be outlining further details of my ministry's specialty care plan: a plan that will reflect the goals recommended by the Premier's Council on Health Strategy and adopted by our government; a plan that, I am confident, will ensure that Ontarians have effective quality health care as close to home as possible.

RESPONSES

CARDIOVASCULAR CARE

Mr Reville: Cardiovascular care is one of several areas identified by the Office of the Premier as a political problem for the Liberal government. The government believes that everyone in Ontario is entitled to quality health care regardless of his ability to pay, as long as he can afford to wait.

Mr Faubert: Have a little heart.

Mr Reville: Right on. This is the second of an expected series of six propaganda announcements. If one listens closely to what the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) has to say today, one may be forgiven for having a sense of déjà vu because virtually every one of these announcements is beginning to become decrepit with age.

For instance, we have already heard about expansion programs at Victoria Hospital and University Hospital, and, of course, in the fancy shell game the minister is playing, it is difficult to tell what the new money is here.

We have already had an expansion at the Sudbury Memorial Hospital. This appears to be an additional expansion. One is sure that that expansion will be welcomed, but let's remember that the other shoe dropped in June 1988.

The Sunnybrook Medical Centre expansion was supposed to be operational at the end of 1988. Operational funds are now being flowed, but it is May 1989 and we still do not know whether it is really up and running or whether this is just an announcement.

There is some talk about this wonderful computer system. That was the wonderful computer system that was announced in June 1988 and we will be glad to know that the computers are going to be able to start printing things out.

The minister does not deal with any predictions about what will happen to the waiting lists, but last January, we had 150 people on a waiting list in Hamilton; 200 at the Ottawa Civic Hospital; 228 at the Victoria Hospital in London, and 95 at the University Hospital in London. How is the minister going to deal with those waiting lists? Will this program do it or will it not?

We noticed that the minister made a special point of highlighting the health promotion aspects of her cardiovascular response. One is pleased that she made a special point of noting it, because, clearly, that is the area in which the most useful initiatives can be taken by this government. But when she talks about \$1 million additional for health promotion grants, we should keep in mind how that compares to what is already being spent on fixing people after they become sick.

In fact, this \$1 million compares to \$1 spent in the institutional system, it is one sixtieth of a cent spent on trying to prevent people from becoming sick in the first place. That is a shockingly inadequate response from this government and it makes one wonder how long this government is going to have the nerve to stand up on its hind legs and boast about shifting the balance of this system.

Finally, there is not one word in the minister's statement today about the nursing shortage, and unless the minister begins to deal with the problem so carefully identified by nurses and others and members of this opposition, the people who have to care for people getting cardiovascular surgery will not be in place.

If the minister thinks that her one initiative in respect to nursing, that is getting nurses involved in the management of hospitals, is enough to solve the nursing crisis, she is dead wrong. The second of the minister's propaganda announcements makes one want to laugh—mirthlessly.

Mr Eves: First, those of us on this side of the House are rather surprised that the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley) was not rising in his place this afternoon to make another statement, but perhaps that will come in another day or so.

With respect to the announcement made today by the Minister of Health, I would like to point out that for over a year members of the opposition

have been asking her about the problems in cardiovascular surgery in the province. Her initial response was that there was no problem.

To use her phraseology, every person who needed emergency heart surgery in Ontario was being adequately dealt with and looked after, and the government would not get involved in "politicizing," as she put it, waiting lists and who needed surgery and who did not.

So, first, there was no problem. Then after the heat became too great out in the public on 9 June 1988—today is 10 May 1989, almost a year later—

Mr Ballinger: Thank you for that information.

I400

Mr Eves: I am glad the member for Durham-York knows that, because the Minister of Health does not know that.

On 9 June 1988, the minister stood in her place in this chamber and said there was no problem, that the cardiovascular surgery unit at Sunnybrook Medical Centre would be up and running almost immediately. "Almost immediately," in her definition, I guess, means 18 months later, because we now know that it will not be up and running until the end of 1989, although the announcement was made halfway through 1988.

When we on this side of the House pointed out to the minister about the St Michael's Hospital report and its scheduling for heart surgery and we quoted to the minister from page 74 of that report, she became very obstinate. The report said: "If Ontario does not devise a system to monitor and manage change, the province's health care system will go from crisis to crisis and public confidence will continue to be eroded."

That was an independent report. The minister stood in her place at that time and disputed that there was a crisis. There was no need to address these problems, which she is now, after the fact, starting to address. She is singing out the other side of her mouth today in this Legislature.

She has gone from crisis to crisis, treating this on an ad hoc basis. When public criticism of the system becomes so great that she has nothing else left to do, she responds to the crisis; unfortunately, a year or 18 months too late.

The member for London North (Mrs Cunningham) is well acquainted with the situation at Victoria Hospital. That hospital is now in the process of considering closing 60 beds because of lack of funding. I am sure the minister's talk about expansion of cardiovascular surgery procedures at Victoria Hospital in London will be well received by that hospital, but the basic problem remains there that it does not have the basic

budget to provide nursing staff, other facilities that are needed, the number of beds that are needed.

Does this just mean that we are going to have more technology? The minister blamed technology before for the waiting lists growing longer and longer. Now we are going to have more technology, more up-to-date services available. Does that mean the waiting lists are going to grow longer and longer? Are the waiting periods going to grow longer and longer?

The conclusions of the St Michael's report, which the minister has not addressed in her statement in the chamber here today, include a significant shortage of qualified critical care nurses, especially in Toronto, without a well-enunciated plan by the government to cure it. That is probably first and foremost. There was no mention of it in the statement today.

The nursing shortage problem has been compounded by budget restraints imposed by the province and has forced hospitals to end the use of agency nurses who cost, on an average, \$10 more per hour than staff nurses. There is a major shortage of technicians who operate heart pump machines during surgery.

A reduction in cardiovascular surgery residency training positions, together with an expansion of cardiovascular surgical resources, has resulted in the lack of trained medical assistants for surgeons during operations.

There has been a decrease in the number of heart patients in Toronto, from 2,709 in 1985 to 2,687 procedures done in 1986, and we know that number is down to just over 2,500 in 1988.

All these problems exist. The minister is starting to address some of the problems, but only starting to address them, and she is addressing them 18 months after members in this Legislature and people in the medical field have made these problems well known to her and her staff at the Ministry of Health. What about the major recommendations and the major problems with respect to staffing, especially with respect to nursing staffing in Ontario?

ORAL QUESTIONS

CONTAMINATED FUEL

Mr B. Rae: I have some questions today for the Minister of the Environment. I might say we are expecting him to make a statement today to clear up the incredible confusion which has surrounded his responses to questions over the last two days.

I would like to ask the minister very directly this simple question: Exactly when did his

ministry know or suspect that toxic substances like polychlorinated biphenyls were being mixed with fuel oil and then transported into Ontario?

Hon Mr Bradley: Our ministry, of course, through the investigations and enforcement branch, has been conducting an ongoing investigation for some period of time into allegations which have been made from sources that it has available to it, allegations which have been made about this practice and other practices as they relate to the transportation of waste, whether it is in the province or across borders into the province.

They have not concluded those investigations yet. They are gathering the hard forensic evidence which is required, first, to confirm allegations and, second, to build a court case so that they can put illegal waste haulers out of business.

Mr B. Rae: The minister cannot get away with that kind of answer in this House. I asked him a very specific question and we are entitled to a very specific answer. His executive assistant is quoted in the *Toronto Star* on 10 May as saying they have known "for about a decade...suspected toxic waste was being mixed with waste 'crankcase oil' from the US."

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr B. Rae: In the *Toronto Sun* on 10 May, "Bradley...admitted Monday his ministry knew since last fall about the waste." Then Steven Naum is quoted in the *Financial Post* on 10 May—and Mr Naum is a special agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigations—as saying that he informed the Ontario Ministry of the Environment early last year.

I asked the minister a very specific question and I am entitled to a very specific answer. I want to know when his ministry learned of specific allegations with respect to the mixing of poisonous substances with fuel oil being transported into Ontario, when he learned about this and why he is not willing to tell us when this investigation—

Hon Mr Bradley: As I very clearly indicated to the leader of the official opposition, our ministry has had an ongoing investigation for a number of months at the present time into all waste practices, including this waste practice. The member will recall that we undertook border checks in April of this year. I think the dates were 11 to 13 April of this year and again the week after that, both at the Niagara crossings and the St Lawrence River crossings.

The purpose of those checks, which included our ministry examining trucks that were coming across, was looking for ways in which people could disguise waste, determining what was on the manifest and what in fact was crossing the river and seeing that everything that was on the paperwork was corresponding to what was reality.

As a result of that, we had examined some 383 trucks, and from those we took some additional samples; some 113 samples that we took went back to the laboratory for further detailed analysis. The member may know that we laid 18 charges of an environmental nature at that time and that we have 23 follow-up investigations which have been launched.

All of that information is derived—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr B. Rae: The minister has still not answered my question and I will put it to him again, and I will put it to him until hell freezes over if that is what it takes to get an answer. My question is simply this, and it is a very specific question: He has this information right in front of him. Why is he not sharing it with the people of Ontario, whose health is at risk because he has refused to tell them? I want him to answer very specifically. When did his ministry learn of specific allegations with respect to toxic substances and when did he personally know about it? Answer that question.

Hon Mr Bradley: As I have indicated to the member, we have an ongoing investigation of this. From time to time, the Ministry of the Environment receives information from members of the Legislature or the general public or from any other source and it follows up on that in terms of a lengthy investigation. The purpose of the investigation is to confirm whether or not these allegations can be confirmed using the hard evidence which is available.

The member may know that there has been discussion of, for instance, crankcase oil and the contamination of crankcase oil which was used to spread on roads as a dust suppressant in years gone by. For that reason, we announced a ban of road oiling because there was a determination that in fact that was happening, and the member may recall—

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The Speaker: Thank you. Order. New question, and to which minister?

Mr B. Rae: The same minister, Mr Speaker. The minister will surely realize that hospitals

burn fuel oil, that people who have homes burn fuel oil and that greenhouses burn fuel oil. Fuel oil is used throughout the province. If it is giving off poisonous gases 25 to 50 times the allowable, permissible amounts in the province, and the evidence is that is precisely what is happening in terms of these substances, people's health is at risk.

When the minister knew and what he did about it is the most important question he has had to answer since he became Minister of the Environment. Why the hell can he not answer that question?

Hon Mr Bradley: The member, I know, is annoyed because the investigations and enforcement branch has been on top of this problem and has been investigating this problem. That is why he is annoyed. He is annoyed because the investigations and enforcement branch is an agency that has been on top of this and has been conducting an investigation.

They get tips from time to time, as I say, from the public and from others as to what might be happening. They have to investigate those to determine whether or not they can be confirmed. When they conduct an investigation such as the border check that took place in April of this year, just last month, and when the results of those tests are forthcoming—I expect them from our laboratory soon—of course we will then be able to determine whether the allegations are accurate or not.

Mr B. Rae: The minister does not seem to understand his obligations to the people of this province. A federal Minister of the Environment resigned, not because tuna was poisoned and not because it was dangerous to people's health but because it smelled bad. The economy of Chile was shut down for two weeks by the federal government and by the American government because of three grapes that were filled with poisonous junk.

We have cars, trucks, hospitals and greenhouses. We have people who may have been breathing this stuff for years on end for all we know and the minister is not telling us what he knew, when he knew it and what information he has been hiding and keeping from the people of this province.

I want to ask the minister to answer this specific question: When did he know about these allegations and why did he not tell a single citizen, before the *Globe and Mail* story broke on Monday, that there was a health risk and a public health problem involved in this?

Hon Mr Bradley: As I indicated to the member and will indicate to him again, the Ministry of the Environment has information that comes to its attention from time to time. I indicated that the Ministry of the Environment has been investigating this for a number of months to look into several places: first of all, what possibly could be crossing the border, the receiving places for it and other material that might come to their attention.

They have been investigating this for a number of months, but they must have the evidence. The member, I think, would agree. The member is a lawyer and he would agree that you have to have the evidence to present to people to confirm rumours. We get all kinds of allegations that come to the attention of the Ministry of the Environment from time to time and we have to confirm those.

That is exactly what we have been doing, an investigation to determine whether the allegations can be confirmed; and second, if they can be, the court case that can be built from that.

Mr B. Rae: I say to the minister that another interpretation of what has happened is that he has been sitting on this information so that he could turn himself into some kind of a hero, which is what he tried to do on Monday, what he tried to do on Tuesday and what he tried to do this morning. He is doing that at the expense of the public health of the people of this province. He has been sitting on this information. There are people who do not know about it. Can the minister tell us why he has not submitted his resignation today to the Premier (Mr Peterson).

Hon Mr Bradley: I am actually surprised—I should not be, I suppose—to hear the tone the member has adopted and the kinds of allegations based on such flimsiness as the member has presented here today. There are many people who are very pleased to see the kind of investigation that our branch, which is the largest branch in Canada, has been conducting on this matter and on other matters related to environmental violations.

It is unfortunate the Leader of the Opposition does not appreciate that kind of effort on the part of the Ministry of the Environment to do that kind of investigation, to gain the co-operation of people on the other side of the border in the Department of Environmental Conservation in New York state, as we have, and to undertake these kinds of border checks, which were all very public.

People were aware of the border check that took place. They took the photographs. They did

all these things designed to ensure that anything coming across the border was going to be tested to determine what problems there might be with waste. Our ministry has been on top of that. Our ministry—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Brandt: My question as well is for the Minister of the Environment. I have heard of stonewalling an answer, but I have seen with my own eyes and heard with my own ears today stonewalling with a wall of words from the Minister of the Environment, who refuses to respond very directly to a question addressed to him with respect to a very simple piece of information that I think he has an obligation to share with this House; namely, when did he know?

Hon Mr Bradley: I say to the member, as I have said to the Leader of the Opposition, that our ministry has for a number of months been conducting investigations about allegations that concern a number of ways in which people are mishandling waste.

The member would know that when we conducted these border checks in the month of April, on two different occasions, one in the Niagara Peninsula along the Niagara River and one along the St Lawrence River, at that time we were attempting to confirm allegations that had been forthcoming and information that would indicate there would be a problem with waste that would be crossing the border into Ontario, and for that matter, waste in Ontario. Our ministry, through the investigations and enforcement branch, has had a lengthy investigation of this. I can say to the member as well, as he would know, that the Ontario Provincial Police—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Brandt: When did the minister know?

Hon Mr Bradley: I will come back to the same answer I have just given the member, and that is that over the last several months the investigations and enforcement branch of the Ministry of the Environment has been investigating this matter as it relates to waste being transported in Ontario and crossing the border of Ontario. When they had the allegations come forward, they were prepared then to conduct the kind of investigation that is necessary to determine whether those allegations were accurate or not.

The member is a former Minister of the Environment. He knows that the investigations and enforcement branch, or whatever it was called when he was Minister of the Environment,

is in a position to have to gather evidence before it can make its accusations, and that is what the Ministry of the Environment investigations and enforcement branch has been doing. The member knows that.

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Mr Brandt: My final supplementary is to the minister as well: By actual count, six questions from the Leader of the Opposition and two questions from myself, eight in total, have asked a very simple, straight, direct, easy question: When did the minister know?

Hon Mr Bradley: The member wishes to ask the same question. I am going to provide him with the answer, with the knowledge. That answer is, as I indicated earlier this week and as I indicate in the House again today, that over the past several months the Ministry of the Environment has been investigating allegations that have been forthcoming about waste management practices in Ontario.

In addition to that, we conducted our investigation by having border checks. As to the trucks that are coming either across the border from New York state, for instance, or from Ontario into New York state—we had the co-operation of people on both sides of the border—those people co-operated with us to ensure that any problems that might exist, whether it is the gasoline-blending problem or any other problem that existed, could be investigated—

The Speaker: Thank you. New question.

Mr Brandt: We know there was an investigation undertaken by his ministry at border crossing points, 11 to 13 April. We know he has an investigative department that is looking into this matter. We know that he was in Ottawa yesterday talking to the Minister of the Environment at the federal level. We know as well that some of his department heads have admitted that for some months at the very least—the period of time is yet indeterminate in terms of its specifics—and some have suggested for as long as a decade, there may have been information available to him to the effect that he was aware of some problems with respect—

Hon Mr Elston: When did you know?

Mr Brandt: I will answer the question.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Kerrio: When did you know, Andy?

Mr Carrothers: When did you know?

Hon Mr Scott: When did you know five guys were after your job? Tell us, when did you first figure that out?

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Scott: Five guys and one woman.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Two; don't leave Margaret out.

Hon Mr Kerrio: You had four ministers who knew about it.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Brandt: I want to say to members of the government that any time they want to ask me a question in this House or outside of this chamber, I would be more than happy to respond.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Do you have a question?

Mr Brandt: May I have an opportunity to address my supplementary—

The Speaker: Please place your question.

Mr Brandt: We have heard the minister take the opportunity to run through a long litany of the activities surrounding this particular issue. There is one fundamental question, however, that the people of Ontario are waiting with some interest to hear from the minister about, and that question is, when did he know?

Hon Mr Bradley: I say to the member for Sarnia who asks this question and uses various time frames—he used the time frame of some 10 years. I wonder, if he has used the time frame of 10 years, whether he was or was not the Minister of the Environment at that time, whether he had any information that was available and whether he initiated any investigations, or were there no investigations taking place in those days? I do not know whether those investigations took place in his day.

As I have indicated to the member, over the past several months the Ministry of the Environment has been involved in an investigation of this matter. Our people have gathered evidence since that time. When they receive an allegation, when they receive a tip of some kind, their responsibility is to begin to gather the evidence. In fact, they began to gather the evidence. That is ongoing. Some of that evidence is at the laboratory at the present time. When that laboratory analysis is complete, we will then have the evidence, which perhaps will be useful in court, but it certainly will be able to confirm or not confirm the allegations that have been made.

Mr Brandt: The minister raises the question whether a former minister, namely myself, was aware 10 years ago that there was contaminated waste being shipped across the border. I am

pleased to respond that I had no knowledge whatever 10 years ago.

If the minister wants to, he too can respond very specifically to a very easy question. It has now been asked, and this will be by actual count, six times on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition, and I have asked the question five times, which is 11. For the 12th time, the people of Ontario have a right to know when the minister knew.

That is the very simple question—and he has a moral obligation, in fact he has a legal obligation, to respond to the public of this province with respect to hazardous contaminants that are being shipped across that border, if he had knowledge of them in advance of the release of the information in the *Globe and Mail*. My question once again, with respect, is, when did he know?

Hon Mr Bradley: I am going to outline for the member again what takes place when an allegation comes in, what takes place when information is provided to the Minister of the Environment, what takes place when any department of the Ministry of the Environment gets information, whether it is from a member of the Legislative Assembly, a member of the public or others.

It is our obligation to investigate when we have received these allegations. The investigation and enforcement branch has in fact been investigating. As I indicated in my earlier answer, the member will recall, when we determined there was a problem, for instance with crankcase oil, we were able to ban using it as a dust suppressant—

Interjections.

Hon Mr Bradley: The member is not listening right now—using it as a dust suppressant in Ontario, when we had that information available. When we have information that is confirmed by the Ministry of the Environment, through the lab analysis, the kind of evidence that is determined, forensic evidence—

The Speaker: Thank you. Final supplementary, the member for Cochrane South.

Mr Pope: When did the minister know?

Hon Mr Bradley: I will answer the question of the member for Cochrane South as I have been, by saying that over the past several months there have been investigations going on by the Ministry of the Environment investigations and enforcement branch. It has been gathering evidence by border checks and by other means to determine the veracity of those allegations.

Mrs Grier: Let me preface my question to the Minister of the Environment by reminding him that when contaminated oil is burned in home furnaces, hospital boilers and greenhouses, the health of the public of this province is at risk. I want to ask the minister, when did he know the health of the people of the province was at risk through contaminated oil being burned?

Hon Mr Bradley: I will be in a position to know that when the member will be in a position to know that. When the laboratory analysis of the evidence we have gathered from our checks and when the investigation has been proceeded with and completed, I will then be in a position to determine the veracity of those allegations.

The Speaker: Supplementary.

Mrs Grier: Mr Speaker, I have no supplementary and I see no point in continuing this charade. Thank you very much.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

1430

ACADEMIC STANDARDS PROGRAMMES SCOLAIRES

M. Daigeler : Contrairement à la position du député conservateur de Markham (M. Cousens), il me fait plaisir de m'adresser à la Chambre dans la langue des Franco-Ontariens et des Franco-Ontariennes.

Ma question s'adresse au ministre de l'Éducation. Le Ministre sait probablement que la semaine dernière, il y a eu une conférence très importante à Montréal sur le développement des programmes scolaires. D'après les rapports que j'ai lus dans les journaux, une question qui a été soulevée concerne la création d'un conseil fédéral pour le développement des programmes scolaires.

D'après la position du professeur David Pratt, de l'Université Queen's, il est faux et il est maintenant impropre d'utiliser la constitution canadienne pour garder dix ou douze systèmes scolaires distincts. Je me demande quelle est la position du Ministre sur cette idée et s'il est prêt à appuyer la création d'un conseil national pour le développement des programmes scolaires?

Hon Mr Ward: The member raises a very important question, one which was raised during a recent conference held in Montreal and sponsored by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. I should point out that the council is chaired this year by my colleague the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mrs McLeod). It was organized to bring together

interested parties in the delivery of education throughout Canada to raise very important issues, issues relating to such things as national standards and the need for some consistency in curriculum.

During the course of that conference I believe a speech was given by a Professor Pratt, who questioned the usefulness of the current provisions of the Constitution which give provinces the responsibility for elementary and secondary education and the usefulness of maintaining 10 or 12 distinct educational systems.

I think it is important that we recognize and understand the tradition that is contained in our Constitution, which provides each province with the opportunity to structure its systems in a way that is consistent with the needs, the aspirations and the wishes of local communities throughout this vast country. Therefore, I would say the notion that we should have a single education system structured on a national scale would be very inconsistent with a tradition that is not only useful but very important to the citizens and the communities in this province.

Mr Daigeler: I appreciate the position the minister is taking, but I think, at the same time, what is being proposed is the establishment of a council that will look into perhaps a more uniform development of curriculum across this country. I wonder whether perhaps that is something that we should continue to look at with a positive kind of orientation, in terms of co-ordinating the type of work that rightfully is done by the individual provinces.

At the same conference, another very important matter, in my opinion, was raised which I think unfortunately is often overlooked. According to the secretary general of the World Confederation of the Organizations of Teaching Professions, there is an alarming trend in industrialized countries to teach students practical skills and to ignore culture and ethics. He was quoted as saying that ethical responsibilities must be the central concern of education today.

The Speaker: Do you have a question?

Mr Daigeler: My supplementary question is to ask how the minister looks at this kind of position and how his ministry is working to teach young people moral responsibility.

Hon Mr Ward: If I can make a few brief comments relating to the member's preamble, I would point out that this whole issue of the need for some consistency in standard in fact has been raised in many, many forums. It has been raised certainly by the business and industry communi-

ty in this province and by educators throughout Canada.

It was that very reason that brought us to recommend, at the last annual meeting of the ministers' council, that we establish a system of evaluation of student performance in key areas, an evaluation system that was consistent and would indicate some sort of national standard. I want to stress that although we believe very much in the vitality and the diversity of provincial education systems, we are very much aware of the need to ensure some consistency of standard as well. That work is, of course, ongoing.

The second point that the member raises, though, I think is one that is very important, and that is the notion that our schools do not exist just to promote basic learning skills but increasingly are being called upon to play a very important role in the development of attitudes and values in our young people. The fact of the matter is that our schools do indeed exist to serve both of those purposes.

Certainly over time, as our society becomes more and more complex, as we develop our problems just as any other society does, most people recognize that education can make a difference. That is what leads us to involve ourselves in issues such as drug abuse and health promotion, and that is as it should be.

The Speaker: Thank you. There are other members who would like to ask questions. There might be; I am not sure.

AMALGAMATION OF MUNICIPALITIES

Mrs Fawcett: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I am sure that the minister is aware that for several months now the town of Cobourg and Hamilton township have been involved in amalgamation talks and that his ministry was invited to partake in these discussions. Could the minister advise us as to the ministry's role and involvement in these talks?

Hon Mr Eakins: In June 1988 the town of Cobourg and the township of Hamilton approached our ministry and requested a study of amalgamation of those two municipalities. The study was presented to all council members for both municipalities, I believe, on 15 March of this year, to inform them of the contents of the report. During the second week of April, the Cobourg town council voted to accept the study as an appropriate course of action for its area. Hamilton township, it is my understanding, has yet to deal with that report.

Mrs Fawcett: Over the past few days there have been suggestions that the Ministry of

Municipal Affairs is trying to force amalgamation upon these municipalities. Would the minister care to comment on these suggestions of forced amalgamation?

Hon Mr Eakins: I firmly believe that a local solution is the best solution. After all, the study was requested by both municipalities. It is my belief that the leadership exists in those two communities to meet together, to arrive at a compromise and to advise us of how they feel the growth of those particular communities should take place. I am very optimistic that a solution can be arrived at and I urge them to continue in that leadership role.

FUNERAL SERVICES

Mr Fleet: My question is for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Recently the minister announced certain unnumbered bills concerning the bereavement sector. This is an area that has been of interest to a number of my constituents. Certainly questions have arisen from time to time and there is obviously a rather long-standing need for reform in this area. I am wondering if the minister might inform the House of the current status of those unnumbered bills.

1440

Hon Mr Wrye: The honourable member has expressed his interest to me on this subject on a number of occasions. He will know, as I indicated in the House in March, that we will introduce, as soon as the legislative language is in place, two unnumbered bills, one involving funeral establishments and the other involving extensive reform of the Cemeteries Act.

Since the release of those unnumbered bills in early April, we have had intensive discussions with the various groups involved in this whole sector. We have clarified some of the issues for them and we have indeed shared with them our view as to the meaning of some of the language in those bills. It is my understanding from my officials that the consultation is now complete and that some final determinations will be coming to me.

I expect that the bills will be presented in a numbered official form in this House, hopefully by the end of the month. Of course, cabinet will want to have a look at the legislative language before we do so, but I can indicate to the member that our consultations have been very positive.

Mr Fleet: The various interest groups involved, cemetery groups, people with interests in funeral homes, monument builders, churches and consumers, all had a fairly heated debate

prior to the introduction or, more accurately, the announcement of the unnumbered bills, and there was really a wide range of changes that were advocated, very heatedly at times, by various groups.

As a result of the additional consultation that has taken place, I wonder whether the minister can indicate if it is going to be possible for those reforms to proceed in a way which is going to leave each of these sectors either intact or improved so that all of the various economic interests will be attended to in an equitable manner.

Hon Mr Wrye: The honourable member raises a good question and makes a good point. Certainly, in my time in this Legislature and especially as Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, I have rarely seen an issue which appeared to be on the surface so divisive and in which the parties appeared to approach the solutions with such a lack of common interest.

However, after the discussions which went on for the best part of three years, the presentation of the statement on the unnumbered bills and indeed the announcement of the government's policy decisions, appear to have been greeted with a very positive point of view by that very diverse sector.

We have been continuing to work with them to see whether there are further improvements we can make without in any way, of course, changing the principles that were enunciated in this House in March. I must say that I find the views of the very diverse—

The Speaker: Thank you. You have made a fairly lengthy, comprehensive answer.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICES

Mr D. R. Cooke: My question is to the Minister of Health. As the minister is aware, the Kitchener area is the largest population centre in Ontario without a medical school or without a teaching hospital, and sometimes specialists are scarce in our area.

The minister will also be aware that the area needs a proper heliport where air ambulances can pick up critically ill patients. The federal government recently decided that the heliport at the Uniroyal Goodrich site would not have its licence renewed, because that particular pad is no longer safe.

I am asking the minister what action has been taken to help resolve this current situation.

Hon Mrs Caplan: I would like to thank the member for his interest in this particular question. In fact, the Kitchener area is well served by

excellent community hospitals and very fine facilities, of which I am extremely proud and I know that he is justifiably proud.

He would be interested to know that Ministry of Health officials have been working with local officials from those hospitals as well as with the city to find a location for a new heliport. I believe this form of regional co-operative planning will lead to a resolution of the current situation in the very near future.

Mr D. R. Cooke: Could the minister be specific and perhaps commit to funding on this project, once a decision has been made with regard to an appropriate site?

Hon Mrs Caplan: Again, I want to acknowledge the member's interest in this important issue in his constituency. With the help of the local police and fire departments, I understand that a couple of potential sites have already been identified. As the member would know, emergency and trauma services are a priority for the Ministry of Health. Once a decision has been made, I want to assure him that if the site is approved we will be funding it appropriately.

CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION

Mr Callahan: I have a question to the Minister of Health. I understand that today or yesterday an inquest into the death of a person as a result of cardiac arrest suggested or recommended that cardiopulmonary resuscitation be made a mandatory subject in the high school system.

Recognizing the fact that very often young people are both physically able to perform CPR and are often around and very available if an elderly person or a person suffers a heart attack, would the minister consider looking into this and perhaps looking into it in conjunction with her colleague the Minister of Education (Mr Ward) in terms of whether that might be an appropriate course that might be taught to people in high school?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I want to thank the member for the question and for bringing this matter to my attention as well as to the attention of the Minister of Education. The member would know that we believe health is more than the treatment of illness and in fact is giving people the information they need to be well. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education work together co-operatively to advise on school health curriculum. I want to thank the member for this suggestion and to assure him that I will ask ministry officials to consider it.

Mr Callahan: It was considered in terms of how much time it would take. Apparently the information provided by St John Ambulance is that the total course would take no more than four hours and perhaps could be fitted into a physical education program in the high schools.

Hon Mrs Caplan: I want to thank the member for the information. I know that St John Ambulance as well as numerous municipalities through their parks and recreation departments, some school boards and a number of community colleges offer these kinds of courses around our province. His suggestion is a creative and innovative one. It is something we are always interested in reviewing, and I thank him for giving me the idea.

EXERCISE MACHINE

Mr Kozyra: My question is to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation. A couple of weeks ago, the minister and I had the benefit of participating in a pilot project and the unveiling of a very special machine in the rehabilitation centre of St Joseph's General Hospital. This was a computerized machine assisting in the rehabilitation of quadriplegics and paraplegics, specifically through an electrode-induced electrical stimulus. It would stimulate arm and leg muscles and help develop them.

We saw an example by the American demonstrator, and it had tremendous benefits. I am wondering, since this was the first such machine in Ontario and was obtained through Wintario funding, whether the ministry is considering additional purchases with the use of these funds.

Hon Mr O'Neil: I would like to thank the member for Port Arthur for his question, because indeed I think that event we did in Port Arthur together was one of the best I have ever seen as far as where Wintario funding is going. I appreciate the suggestion the member has made and I can tell him that we will certainly look into that because it is indeed a very worthy cause.

Mr Kozyra: This supplementary is in the way of a suggestion, because I know that from time to time on the Wintario draw programs certain features of communities are publicized. This struck me as an extremely positive and beneficial aspect, and I would think this might be publicized so that other communities are aware of it. It might increase the demand for these machines and I think that would be a good idea. Would the minister consider that?

Hon Mr O'Neil: Again, I think that is an ideal suggestion. As was mentioned, I believe this was the first machine that has been purchased in

Canada. The Canadian Paraplegic Association in Thunder Bay was very pleased with it, and after the demonstration that we saw I was very impressed with it. I like the suggestion that maybe we could have it on one of our Wintario shows so that other associations across not only Ontario but other parts of Canada would be aware of what the machine is able to do and how it would be so much of an assistance to people in this category.

1450

TUITION FEES FOR REFUGEE CLAIMANTS

Mrs LeBourdais: My question is for the Minister of Colleges and Universities. Her ministry has recently decided to waive differential fees for some refugee claimants. Could she provide some details regarding the policy change and why this action has been undertaken?

Hon Mrs McLeod: I should first explain that foreign students attending colleges and universities in Ontario are required to pay a differential fee which is considerably larger than the fee that Ontario or Canadian citizens pay. We have made a policy decision to waive that differential fee for refugee claimants who have been resident since prior to January of this year. I think it is important to recognize that, of course, those students would still have to qualify for positions in a college or university and would still pay the regular tuition fee.

We were concerned about these refugee claimants because these are people who have been waiting for a hearing for periods of as long as two to four years. We are all aware of the backlog that has built over time in hearing those claims. We believe, from our information from the federal immigration department, that it could be as long as two years before this backlog is cleared. We felt this was an unduly long time to have people waiting and still having to pay that differential fee.

Mrs LeBourdais: By way of supplementary, some reports indicate that federal immigration officials are surprised at this recent decision. Is our policy consistent with the federal direction as we know it?

Hon Mrs McLeod: In fact there is a federal immigration official in Kitchener who has indicated some surprise with our change in policy. Certainly our understanding, and it has been reaffirmed this week, is that this is not a policy of the federal immigration department, but they are not surprised or dismayed at the policy direction we have taken.

Again, our information is that with new refugee claimants, the federal policies, the new direction will allow them to move very quickly to deal with claimants and that we will not experience a buildup of backlog again, so our current policies can remain in place for new refugee claimants. It is only for those who have been here since prior to 1 January that we have had to change our policy.

OAKVILLE-TRAFALGAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Mr Carrothers: My question is for the Minister of Health. In the spring of 1987, the then Minister of Health announced funding for the expansion of the Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital. To date, that project has not been finalized and construction has not commenced. Could the minister advise the House of the status of that project?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I want to thank the member for his question. I am aware of the press release from the hospital and also the work that the hospital has been doing. As the member knows, I met with them in December and encouraged them to be innovative and creative and to look at focusing on the needs of their community, not only today but in the future. I can tell him that we have not received their proposal but that we are anxious to receive it because we have been encouraging innovation, creativity and good planning in this province.

Mr Carrothers: Given the interest of the ministry in innovation and finding new ways of providing health services to our communities and since I know that the hospital has reworked its plan and come up with some very new and innovative ways of providing services to the Oakville community, would the minister then be in a position to give this project expeditious consideration when their plan comes forward, which I understand will be very shortly?

Hon Mrs Caplan: Let me say to the member that, in fact, I am anxious for the ministry to have an opportunity to review the proposal. I can say to him, without having seen it, that we are very supportive of innovation and do consider opportunities to support communities in good planning in asking them to look at new information to ensure that before we put the shovel in the ground we are meeting the real and changing needs of the community and acknowledging how technology is allowing us to provide services in alternative ways. I can say to him that I am looking forward to receiving the proposal from the Oakville-

Trafalgar Memorial Hospital as soon as they are able to submit it to the ministry.

COURT SYSTEM

Mr Callahan: I have a question for the Attorney General. Yesterday or the day before, I read in the press that British Columbia has apparently adopted the single-court system for criminal services, I believe. Recognizing that the Attorney General had made announcements in the House earlier with reference to a two-stage program for dealing with that, can I inquire whether the British Columbia process has gotten to the stage where it perhaps is receiving some form of federal support with reference to its judges becoming section 96 judges?

Hon Mr Scott: I would like to thank the honourable member for the interesting question. If he read the same press report I did, and I believe he did, it discloses an error, because it suggests that British Columbia has announced that it will move from a two-tier hierarchy to a single hierarchy. In fact, British Columbia at present, like Ontario, has a three-tier hierarchy and will be moving to a two-tier hierarchy, which is an adoption, if I can flatter ourselves by calling it that, of phase 1 of the program we announced last week.

British Columbia has not indicated it will adopt our phase 2, though at the attorney generals' conference I have no doubt the issue will be listed, and when we return from Anne of Green Gables for the serious meetings in Prince Edward Island, we will canvass with them the possibility of their emulating our program in that province as well.

Mr Callahan: I wonder if I can inquire if there are any provinces within Canada that presently have a system whereby there is contribution or payment by the federal government for what is the equivalent of section 96 judges there but perhaps would not be section 96 judges within Ontario?

Hon Mr Scott: As the honourable member knows, we have a unified family court in the city of Hamilton in which joint appointments are made by the federal and provincial governments; the cost of those appointments is funded by the federal government though the province provides the support services.

There is ample precedent in Ontario for the province making contribution in respect of section 96 judicial work. For example, in the Supreme Court of Ontario, the establishment of the masters' office and the family law commissioners; those offices, as the honourable member

knows from his practical experience, are offices that are discharging section 96 functions though they are funded by the province in every respect. So when we come to discuss these questions with the federal Attorney General, who has expressed his interest in our proposal, there will be much to be said on both sides with respect to a co-operative financial arrangement.

OPTOMETRISTS' FEES

Mr Pelissero: I have a question for the Minister of Health. Just recently I met with a group of optometrists from my riding. I was wondering if the minister could advise the House of the status of the negotiations between the Ministry of Health and the optometrists?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I know of the member's interest in this particular issue and I am pleased to advise him that cabinet has approved a new fee schedule for Ontario health insurance plan insured optometry services. The new fee schedule is fair and equitable and in fact provides for equity with ophthalmology, as requested by optometrists.

Mr Pelissero: I was wondering if there are any outstanding issues from the negotiations that are to be resolved?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I want to thank the member for the supplementary, because in fact as we work together with the many health professionals across this province, there are always ongoing issues and negotiations which are continuing and must, of course, in the future be resolved. I look forward to working with representatives from optometry as we move into the future in a spirit of co-operation as we seek to resolve the issues as they present themselves in an atmosphere which I believe is very positive.

FOOD INDUSTRY

Mr McGuigan: My question is for the Minister of Agriculture and Food. I have been speaking to food processors in southwestern Ontario, those involved particularly in vegetables. They are making the complaint that now that we have the free trade agreement, they are at some disadvantage. They want to purchase their raw products on the same basis as the United States prices and quality. I wonder what we are doing to meet those complaints?

1500

Hon Mr Riddell: The second report of the Premier's Council devoted a whole chapter to the food industry and indicated that, because of the free trade agreement, the food industry was

going to have to make some dramatic changes if it was going to compete with the industry in the United States.

One of the points raised was that raw product pricing is putting our food industry in an uncompetitive situation. As a result of the information that we have received to this point in time, the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food have developed a food industry strategy. One of the first things we did was establish a Food Industry Advisory Committee. This committee has been meeting now for the last two months, I would say, and it has had fairly widespread discussions on raw product pricing and the effect that it has on the food industry.

When we look at it, raw product pricing is maybe only a small contributor to the uncompetitive situation the food processors are in. You have to take a look at other things, such as the labour unions. You have to look at salaries and wages, the cost of packaging, the cost of marketing, all of which are much higher than in the United States. So, raw product pricing is not the culprit that we may think it is.

Mr McGuigan: Specifically with regard to the tomato processing industry, I wonder if the minister could comment on some of the discussions that are taking place between the board and the processors.

Hon Mr Riddell: As I indicated, they had quite an elaborate discussion on raw product pricing, and I think afterwards the food processors had a better understanding of how marketing boards operate. We have something like 26 marketing boards in this province, and they all operate in a different way. Some negotiate price, others set price, others market by way of auction.

I think the food processors were somewhat satisfied that we do have a fair system from the standpoint of raw product pricing in this province, but what they also recognized is that they have a higher-quality product to process, the product grown in this province, than they do in the United States. So we are looking at tomatoes from Canadian plants; we are looking at quality.

All of these things taken into consideration, I think the processors are satisfied that the product we grow here in Ontario is probably the best product you will get anywhere.

NURSES' PARTICIPATION IN HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT

Mr Neumann: My question is to the Minister of Health. This being Nurses Week, I am going to ask a question related to her initiatives to give

nurses more of a say in the operation of hospitals, more involvement in the decision-making within hospitals.

Recently, the executive director of the Brantford General Hospital came out publicly opposed to nurses being involved as members of the board of hospitals. He indicated that there was a problem with conflict of interest. Does the minister see this as a problem? If so, what is she doing about it?

Hon Mrs Caplan: As the member knows, nurses are very important partners in the delivery of health services in this province. We are committed to seeing that nurses have a greater say in participating on hospital committees right across this province. That is why we brought forward new regulations mandating the participation of both staff nurses and nurse managers.

The issue of board governance is one which will be discussed as we review the new Public Hospitals Act. In fact, there will be much discussion about who should be represented on those boards, and issues such as conflict of interest—participation on the board of an institution of which you are a member—will all have to be discussed thoroughly at that time.

I thank the member for his interest and also for his appreciation of the role that nurses play in this province.

PETITIONS

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr Cleary: I have a petition to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from some 472 residents of my riding, asking that the Parliament of Ontario implement the recommendations of the Thomson report so that greater social justice can be created in Ontario.

I have also endorsed the petition.

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION

Mr Reycraft: I have a petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that all teachers who retired prior to 31 May 1982 have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than at the present seven or 10 years.

"The proposed amendment would make the five-year criteria applicable to all retired teachers

and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

The petition is signed by 230 teachers from the riding of Renfrew North, one of whom is a Mrs Mary A. Conway, who I understand is an aunt of the government House leader. I have affixed my signature.

I have another petition addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition of Ontario as follows:"

The wording is the same as the last petition which I submitted. It is signed by 10 people from the riding of Niagara Falls and I have affixed my signature to it.

NATUROPATHY

Mr Reycraft: I have a third petition addressed to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas it is my constitutional right to have available and to choose the health care system of my preference;

"And whereas naturopathy has had self-governing status in Ontario for more than 42 years;

"We petition the Ontario Legislature to call on the government to introduce legislation that would guarantee naturopaths the right to practise their art and science to the fullest without prejudice or harassment."

It is signed by 10 people from the riding of Scarborough North and I have affixed my signature.

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION

Mr Morin-Strom: I have a petition signed by 679 residents of my community, Sault Ste. Marie. I have about 50 petitions here. They read as follows:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that all teachers who retired prior to 31 May 1982 have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than at the present seven or 10 years.

"This proposed amendment would make the five-year criteria applicable to all retired teachers

and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

I endorse this petition and ask that the government act upon it.

REPORT BY COMMITTEE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Mr McLean from the standing committee on government agencies presented the committee's Report on Agencies, Boards and Commissions (No 15) and moved its adoption.

Mr McLean: Under standing order 90(f), the standing committee on government agencies was given the mandate to review the operations of all agencies, boards and commissions of the government of Ontario. The committee is empowered to make recommendations on such matters as redundancy of agencies, their accountability, whether they should be submitted and whether their mandate roles should be revised.

In accordance with the terms of reference, the committee decided to review the operation of the following agencies: Advisory Committee on Occupational Health and Occupational Safety, Ontario Waste Management Corp and the St Lawrence Parks Commission. During August and September 1988, the committee conducted public hearings with respect to these agencies and heard testimony from the representatives of the agencies, and in one case from community representatives.

The committee wishes to express its appreciation to all the witnesses who presented their views. The committee wishes to acknowledge the co-operation of the officials of the various ministries of the government of Ontario and the agencies themselves. In addition, the committee urges ministers under whom these agencies fall to give serious and thoughtful consideration to the committee's recommendations.

The committee wishes to express its appreciation to the clerks of the committee and the research officers for their assistance and dedication to the work of the committee.

The recommendation contained in this report represents a consensus of opinion, rather than complete agreement on every issue that was before the committee. While each member of the committee may not agree with every recommendation, your committee is pleased to present a report that each member can support.

On motion by Mr McLean, the debate was adjourned.

1510

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1989

Mr Fleet moved first reading of Bill 9, An Act to amend certain Statutes to create Heritage Day and Civic Holiday as Public Holidays.

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker: Does the member wish to enlighten us on the purpose of the bill?

Mr Fleet: This bill is a technical correction to Bill 6, which I introduced last Thursday. It is intended to correct an oversight that left out a provision for an existing holiday, namely, Boxing Day. As I proposed last week, I would like to reiterate that it is certainly time we had both the Civic Holiday and Heritage Day as public holidays in Ontario.

MOTION TO SET ASIDE ORDINARY BUSINESS

Mr B. Rae, in the absence of Mrs Grier, moved that pursuant to standing order 37(a), the ordinary business of the House be set aside, Wednesday, 10 May 1989, to discuss a matter of urgent and pressing concern; namely, the public health threat that exists in Ontario as a result of the illegal distribution and sale of contaminated fuels and the failure of the Minister of the Environment to move to protect public health, although knowing of this threat for several months.

The Speaker: The member has placed a motion. However, I believe it should have been the proper procedure to ask for permission of the House to move the motion in place of another member. I believe we have done that in the past. Would the member ask for unanimous consent? Is there agreement?

Agreed to.

The Speaker: Members have heard the motion. I must inform the members that notice was received at 9:45 am. I also received another notice for a similar motion, I believe, at 10:05 am. However, I have ruled in the past that the one received first would be considered first. Therefore, I will listen to the Leader of the Opposition and representatives from the other parties for up to five minutes on why this matter should be discussed.

Mr B. Rae: Canadians across the country, and in particular in this province, became aware of a problem, with respect to the contamination of fuel being used for home heating purposes, as diesel fuel in trucks and cars and across the range

of things people use gasoline and fuel for, on Monday of this week in a story that ran in the *Globe and Mail*.

We have been trying on a number of occasions to get the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley) in this province to answer a very direct question. That question is simply this: Exactly what did he know about this information and when did he know it? That is not a difficult question. It is a very direct question and it is one that was put to him on this day some 13 times. In his absence yesterday, we put similar questions to the Premier (Mr Peterson). The Premier's response was that he did not know, as Premier of the province, anything about this until he read about it in the paper on Monday.

This, of course, is an issue that has been debated in the House of Commons as well and there has been a variety of answers from different ministers, federal and provincial, with respect to what they knew.

The reason this matters is not because of some terribly complicated or arcane parliamentary reason, but simply because the public health of this province is one of the critical responsibilities of all the ministers of the crown, and in particular it is the responsibility of the Minister of the Environment.

Our view is very clear. If the Ministry of the Environment had information with respect to the contamination of fuel being sold in Ontario with substances that are toxic, that are poisonous and that are potentially carcinogenic, the Ministry of the Environment and the minister personally had the obligation to tell the people of Ontario about that risk and about that fact.

Si le ministre de l'Environnement (M. Bradley) a l'information sur la toxicité du carburant vendu partout dans la province, il a l'obligation claire et nette de partager cette information avec le public en Ontario. C'est ce qu'il doit faire.

That is what he must do.

It was interesting to watch the response of the Minister of the Environment over the last few days. As opposed to his federal counterpart, who insisted on Monday that he did not know about this, that he had just read about it and that he was going to do what he could to find out about it, what was the reaction of our own Minister of the Environment?

In a series of obfuscatory responses he gave to my colleague the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, and outside this chamber, he said, "We've been carrying on an investigation for a number of months." Nothing can surprise our Bingo. He knew all about it. He was in

charge. He was there. He had his people on top of it. He was going to get the big guys and he was going to nail them to the wall.

Then we asked the question, "What about the OPP?" If you are really going to go after organized crime, Mr Speaker, which the minister mentioned today on Canada AM, what would you do? Would you send the minister down to Queenston Heights to have a look at trucks crossing the border and ask people, "Say, are any of you fellows involved with organized crime?" No, you would have the police, the OPP, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Federal Bureau of Investigation; you would have a major police investigation on both sides of the border.

The Solicitor General (Mrs Smith) said yesterday she did not know anything about it, that she was involved on the revenue side, that she had nothing to do with contaminated fuel.

We have a series of very different answers to very basic and important questions, but I come back to the foundation. The foundation of what we have been about today is to get the minister—we asked him 13 times. Bingo's number came up 13 times and Bingo never answered. He had a chance to answer a very simple question: When did he know there was a problem? When did he know about the possibility of contamination? If he knew and did nothing, if he knew and failed to tell the public of Ontario about a potential danger, that minister should be gone, that minister should resign, because he has failed his most fundamental obligations.

Mrs Marland: In rising to speak to this motion, I want to say at the outset that I recognize I am not the most experienced member of this Legislature, but I have experienced this afternoon something I hope I will never have to experience again. I have been here four short years and this afternoon, when the Minister of the Environment was being questioned on the very essence of a problem affecting and putting at risk the health of the people of Ontario, throughout all those questions he absolutely refused to answer, we experienced the Premier of this province sitting in his seat smiling and laughing. If that is the degree of seriousness with which this Liberal government takes this serious subject, then I have to tell members that we are in worse trouble than I thought.

1520

For those members who are at this moment defending that kind of attitude of the Liberal government, I say to them that if I had the time, I would read their ridings into the record, because we are dealing with one of the most serious

problems that has faced this province in a large number of years. The degree of seriousness is demonstrated by us, the two opposition parties, because right now in this Legislature we do not even have the Minister of the Environment in his seat. We do not even have the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment, the member for Brampton North (Mr McClelland), in his seat. Is it not interesting that this is the degree of seriousness with which this matter is held in the opinions and the mind of the Liberal government?

I want to say that we are dealing with something that obviously changes as time goes by. Obviously, standards change depending which side of the House people sit on. I want to refer to Hansard of 3 May 1983 when a "Mr Peterson"—unfortunately, Hansard does not recall his riding and I do not have that reference before me—said, "I have a question for the Minister of the Environment relating to the matter of Swaru, the solid waste reduction unit, and the emissions of dioxins and furan from that plant."

He goes on further to say, and I quote: "Surely the minister's responsibility is to move ahead of time, not after the fact. His entire approach seems to be that we will wait until someone gets very ill or until there is evidence, and then we will move on the situation."

How interesting that this same Mr Peterson then continues to say:

"I am back to the Minister of the Environment on this matter, with whose approach I fundamentally disagree. He is waiting for evidence of major health problems before he is prepared to move, and by that time it is going to be too late."

How interesting that this same Mr Peterson is today the Premier of Ontario. He is the same person who in 1983 was concerned about risk to human health in this province. However, today we not only have him laughing and smiling throughout those questions that were repeatedly asked of this minister, but we also have a situation where on Monday of this week the Premier's Minister of the Environment said the Ontario Provincial Police were involved in this matter this resolution addresses.

How interesting that the next day the Solicitor General says, "the OPP have not been involved." If I had had an opportunity this afternoon, I would have asked the Premier of this province which of his ministers speaks for his Liberal government. Who is telling the truth of the facts of this very serious concern to the public in Ontario? This debate is necessary this afternoon

and is an emergency, because as of today no one can get to the truth of the matter either through the Minister of the Environment or the Solicitor General. I am sorry the parliamentary events of this afternoon have been reduced to this level.

Hon Mr Conway: Mr Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to have a few moments to respond on behalf of the government to the notice of motion standing in the name of the Leader of the Opposition and one that has been offered as well by the leader of the third party, both of which were received by your office midmorning today.

I must say that upon the receipt of those notices of motion you have quite properly ruled to be in order under the provisions of standing order 37, I came this afternoon to this House expecting that we would be setting aside the ordinary business of the Legislature today to deal with a matter that I do believe to be of some importance, and quite frankly, speaking on behalf of the government, I am quite prepared to see three hours of time dedicated to the debate. Let me put that before my colleagues at the first instance.

Unlike a number of the other motions that have been offered, I happen to believe that the two that were offered today come closer to the requirement of standing order 37 than many of the others I might imagine. Having said that—

Mr Brandt: You're not in opposition.

Hon Mr Conway: I want to say to the leader of the third party that I listened with real interest to the previous two speakers, and I have been there. I have said this many times before. What we see in here today is a very important part of our parliamentary dialectic. We see an opposition doing what an opposition must do.

I get exercised when I hear the previous speaker, who can be, to put it as felicitously as I can, as vigorous a partisan as can be found in this chamber or as vigorous a partisan as I can ever recall this chamber having had in the 14 years I have had the pleasure to serve in here. And when I hear the member for Mississauga South (Mrs Marland) say, as she just did, that she would have liked to have had the opportunity to ask the leader of the government some questions here today, who is she kidding? Does she really think there is someone in this room who honestly believes that anything other than her own political imperative prevented her from asking the question she laments not being able to ask today?

I want to say that the Minister of the Environment is not here because he is preparing for this debate. I assume he is out meeting the

press, a press that has been well primed by our friends in the opposition.

I repeat, for the benefit, I suppose, of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr B. Rae), that I recognize what an opposition has to do. I have done it, and that is very fundamental to our system.

I absolutely reject the analysis the Leader of the Opposition has offered with respect to how the Minister of the Environment has met his responsibilities. I say very clearly in this chamber what I believe the Premier said outside the chamber a few moments ago; that is, we believe the Minister of the Environment has acted very, very responsibly in this matter, as he has in all other matters. I am sure he will be joining us shortly to participate in this debate.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Conway: I want to say to my friend the member for Lanark-Renfrew (Mr Wiseman) and others that we, as a government, take some real pride in what the Ministry of the Environment has done over four years to address the whole area of environmental protection. We do not claim perfection. Of course we have more to do and we intend to do it, but I think it must be said, if not to honourable members of the opposition who have the very important imperatives of a parliamentary opposition role to meet, at least to the public watching this debate this afternoon that we have, in government, certain responsibilities about public safety that must be met.

We believe that under the leadership of the Minister of the Environment—

Mr Eves: He won't even tell us when he first knew about it.

Hon Mr Conway: —we have taken all responsible measures to meet that requirement, and we are quite prepared to tell the member for Parry Sound (Mr Eves) and anyone else how we have gone about that responsibility. Of course, we are quite prepared to be judged by fair-minded people in the public—

Mrs Marland: You will be. Don't worry.

Hon Mr Conway: —if not by our friend the member for Mississauga South and others, whose imperatives may be of another kind. We are quite prepared to debate this issue today and to be judged on what we have done by the public of Ontario. I say let us get on with this debate at the present moment.

The Speaker: We have now completed the business under standing order 37(a), (b) and (c). We have come to standing order 37(d), which

means I must put the question, shall the debate proceed?

Agreed to.

The Speaker: The debate will proceed and I remind members that they may speak for up to 10 minutes. The debate may continue until we have run out of speakers or the clock strikes six.

1530

CONTAMINATED FUEL

Mr B. Rae: I have already outlined, I hope as clearly as I can, the variety of stories that are now floating around in the name of the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley) and in the name of the Solicitor General (Mrs Smith) and in the name of the Premier (Mr Peterson) about exactly who knew what and who said what to whom and who is in fact in charge of the investigation into the contamination of Ontario's fuel oil.

But I want to simply recount the variety of answers which we have had from the minister and from the federal ministers and from various people about exactly who knew what. Gary Gallon, who we all know is the executive assistant to the minister, is quoted in the *Toronto Star* as saying that there has been a suspicion for some time, in fact for a decade, about the mixing of suspected toxic waste with waste crankcase oil.

The minister then admitted on Monday to the *Toronto Sun*: "His ministry knew since last fall about the waste. But he said he didn't want to blow the investigation into the source."

Then we have a story from the *Financial Post* dated 10 May where a special agent by the name of Steven Naum has told the *Financial Post*:

"Ontario's Environment ministry was told early last year the US Federal Bureau of Investigation was investigating shipments of contaminated fuel into Canada, an FBI officer in Buffalo says.

"Special agent Steven Naum said the ministry was informed last spring the FBI was looking into a Buffalo company suspected of blending toxic waste into fuel bound for Canada.

"The Canadian authorities were aware of our investigation."

In responding to questions in this House, the Minister of the Environment has always given the following answer, and he gave it not once but 13 times today. All he says is that there is currently an investigation going on and, "It has been going on"—I am using his words—"for some period of time now." That is all he has been prepared to say publicly.

But he went on Canada AM this morning, and I could see the minister visibly puffing himself up as he said this. He said his interest was in the kingpins and not in the small fry. He went on to say that the kingpins might well be connected to organized crime, and he also promised—and you can almost hear the background music: dum de dum dum—a long, hot summer for wrongdoers and that he personally would nail them to the wall.

That is the effort by the Minister of the Environment to show that he in fact has been on top of this from the very beginning, that he has known all about it and that there were no surprises in the Globe and Mail story. It might have been a surprise to Lucien Bouchard. It might have been a surprise to the Solicitor General. It might have been a surprise to the Premier of Ontario. It might have been a surprise to every single citizen in Ontario. It might have been a surprise to the entire federal cabinet, the RCMP and the federal Department of the Environment, but it was not a surprise to the Minister of the Environment in Ontario. He knew all about it.

There are no surprises for the Minister of the Environment. He knows all about everything. He has been in charge of this thing from the beginning. He is on top of the situation. How often have I heard the Premier make that comment? “Is there going to be an environmental assessment for the people who are about to get dumped on in Durham?” “Don’t worry. The minister is on top of that.” Ask him any question and he will say, “We all know the minister is on top of that.”

I am here to call the minister’s bluff. We are all here to call the minister’s bluff. If he is so smart, if he is so good and he has been in charge and on top of all this information, why in the name of goodness has he not shared it with the people whose health is at risk because of what this information is? Why?

Before I come back to that point, because that really is the central question, I also want to raise some other fundamentals, because this is an angle that of course is going to be explored for some time to come. If organized crime is involved and if there are “kingpins” involved, let me put the most plausible question to you, Mr Speaker.

Do you not think that when the Solicitor General was asked a question yesterday about whether she was involved and the Ontario Provincial Police were involved in the question of the tainting of fuel, she would have said: “Of

course. Not only is Jim on top of it. I am on top of it too. We are all on top of it in Ontario”?

That was not her answer. What was her answer? “Any questions about tainted fuel are being handled by the Minister of the Environment. The only thing I am dealing with is the question of the revenue scam. That is the only part that I am dealing with. That is the only part that I am concerned about.”

She did not say anything to me about kingpins yesterday. She did not say anything about: “We are going to nail the kingpins to the wall and we don’t care about the small fry. We want to go after organized crime. We want to go after the syndicate or the Mafia or whoever it may be and we are going to get those people.” She did not have those illusions of what was going on. Only the Minister of the Environment did.

Mr Speaker, if you are dealing with the syndicate, if you are dealing with organized crime or you are dealing with the Mafia, do you really think that a Ministry of the Environment inspector standing at a border site is going to be the way to deal with it? Do you really think you are going to send the Minister of the Environment down there in a trench coat at three o’clock in the morning and deal with that problem? Do not be absurd.

Only in the fantasies of a Walter Mitty character like the Minister of the Environment would we have this kind of a scenario being displayed. It is only being displayed in his own mind. In this quest for the big hit and in his determination to convince the people of Ontario that he knows all about everything that is going on and he really is aware of it all, he has missed the boat on the fundamental obligation of the Minister of the Environment.

Let me put this to him and let me put this to you, Mr Speaker: If he ever suspected that this fuel oil was being sold in this province, had information that that was the case, suspected that that information was accurate, suspected that it was not a crank call and suspected that it was true, what would we expect of the Minister of the Environment?

I would expect him to come into this House and make a statement. If the House is not sitting, I would expect him to hold a press conference. I would expect him to tell the people of Ontario exactly what the nature of the information is that he has. I would expect him to say to the citizens of Ontario: “This is a problem. We must all be aware of it and we must take steps to deal with it.”

Mr Speaker, if there are discount sellers, bootleg sellers, whatever name you want to use, that are out there selling tainted fuel oil or even suspected of selling tainted fuel oil, would you not phone up every single major industrial purchaser? Would you not phone up every single hospital, every single school board, every single major purchaser and say, "Whatever you do, do not buy this stuff"? Would you not tell the home owners of the province? Would you not tell my colleague the member for Riverdale (Mr Reville) who has asked the question: "What do I do with my lawn mower on Saturday morning? Do I put gasoline into it or not?" How do we know?

Could the minister stand up in the House today and answer the very simple question asked by my colleague the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore (Mrs Grier): "Can he give us the guarantee, the assurance, that the fuel oil that is being sold today in the province is not contaminated? Are home owners today safe?"

We have David Oved, another one of the minister's executive assistants, whom we have all come to know over many years in another capacity, saying proudly that there were three sites that were being investigated in Ontario. He said that yesterday, quoted in the *Globe and Mail*. How about the people who live near those three sites? How about the kids who are going to school next to those three sites? I do not know where the three sites are. Does anybody here know where they are? Has anybody been informed of where they are?

Perhaps the Minister of the Environment knows. If he knows, he is not telling us. We have all joked over the years about how the minister stonewalls. We have compared him with ministers in the past in the Tory party who were so apparently effective at defusing questions by refusing to answer them. The joke is over. The stonewalling has to stop.

The critical issue that has to be there that he has to answer very clearly and categorically to the members of this House is when he knew, what he knew and why he did not tell the people of Ontario when he knew it. Those are the questions he has failed to answer.

1540

M. Pope : C'est un plaisir pour moi de me joindre à ce débat sur la question de responsabilité du ministre de l'Environnement. C'est une question très importante pour le public de l'Ontario.

Why are we here today in this emergency debate? I think it is important for the people of

this province who are watching or who may hear of this debate to understand that there have been reports in the media of the city of Toronto and throughout this great province, and indeed throughout the country and the United States, that shipments of gasoline and fuel oil products from New York state were mixed with and contained contaminants, namely, polychlorinated biphenyls, and that the result of that is very serious for the health and safety of the people of Ontario.

We know that this gas and fuel oil so contaminated was widely distributed and presumably widely used by trucking companies, sand and gravel companies, home owners and gas stations throughout southern Ontario and presumably perhaps throughout the rest of Ontario as well, a very important health and safety hazard that has been recognized for years as requiring urgent government action.

Here we have a Minister of the Environment and before him the Premier and the Solicitor General of this government who now since the beginning of the week have been unable or unwilling to answer the questions that the opposition have a responsibility to put to them in order to assure the people of Ontario that their health and safety are being protected by their provincial government.

I want the people who are watching and who may read the Hansard report of this debate to understand that 13 times today the Minister of the Environment was asked "When did he know?" The Leader of the Opposition (Mr B. Rae), who just spoke, himself personally asked the question six times, my leader asked the question five times, I asked it once, the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore asked it once, and on each occasion we got gibberish and nonsense from the Minister of the Environment and a refusal to answer the basic question "When did he know?"

Why is that question important? It is important because there are reports, as the Leader of the Opposition said, from various news sources that this government may have known months ago, if not last year, if not years ago, that this potential danger to the public existed. It is important for us to know whether or not the Minister of the Environment, bearing in mind the health and safety of the public, the people of this province, promptly acted as he was responsible to do under the existing legislation to take care of this environmental problem, this hazard that could affect thousands of people across the province.

We have a responsibility to ask those questions and, more important, the Minister of the

Environment has a responsibility to answer those questions. When a minister is asked 13 straight times the question of when he personally knew and refuses to answer to the general applause of his Liberal cabinet colleagues, to the smiles of the Premier, to the approbation of the Attorney General (Mr Scott), who is responsible for justice in this province, we have a right to do what we did today, and that is to leave question period as a show of protest against this minister who refuses to answer the most basic of all questions on this issue affecting the health and safety of thousands of the people of this province.

What the viewers did not necessarily see today, may not have seen as they viewed this debate was that the combined opposition left the chamber during question period in protest against a Minister of the Environment who refuses to tell us when he personally knew about this very hazardous situation existing in Ontario.

Now we are faced, in the first opening comments of the government House leader, the member for Renfrew North (Mr Conway), representing the Liberal government, with the fact that he says the minister acted responsibly, that he is proud of what has happened, that the minister is prepared to tell all.

If the minister is prepared to tell all, why did he not tell us the 13 times he was asked in question period when he knew about this situation? If he is prepared to tell, why has he not told us and the people of Ontario about his involvement and his so-called leadership in resolving this potentially hazardous situation?

If the government House leader is so proud of the Minister of the Environment, why did he not take the opportunity to stand up and tell us when the Minister of the Environment, the Ministry of the Environment and the government knew about this hazardous situation? If the government House leader thinks his minister acted responsibly, can he tell us why he has not answered the questions the opposition has about this government's performance in this whole matter?

We are entitled and the people are entitled to know when the minister knew. He has refused to tell us. Once we have that information, we are entitled to know when the officials of the Ministry of the Environment knew. We are entitled to know what the Minister of the Environment did when he first knew. We are entitled to know what his officials did when they first knew.

We are entitled to know why we are facing this incredible delay of weeks if not months in advising the people of this province of this

serious threat to their health and safety. We are getting no answers. We have yet to have an answer today or yesterday or the day before from this government on this serious issue.

I am now advised that the Minister of the Environment has told the media outside but not us in the Legislature that he knew from January, that in January he knew of this hazardous situation. I think, therefore, we are entitled to know why he waited from January until the story appeared in the *Globe and Mail* this week, why he waited those four and a half months before advising the people of Ontario of this hazardous situation that could affect their health and their lives.

We are entitled to know why he did not immediately have testing done at the border in January, why he did not have the chemical analysis done within days and why he did not immediately go public and warn the people, particularly the sand and gravel companies, the gasoline stations, the trucking companies and people who may have consumed these products in their homes.

We are entitled to know why the minister waited from January until today when the opposition is forcing him now to answer these questions.

Interjection.

Mr Pope: It is not a question, as the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr Kerrio) interjected, of not wanting to alert the crooks. We are talking about the safety and health of the people of Ontario. We have a waybill system. We have ways of tracking back these shipments. The Minister of the Environment has a primary obligation in law and under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act to immediately make public to the people any information which may affect their health and safety.

He has violated his own laws and we are entitled to know why he deliberately violated the laws of this province and put at risk the health and safety of the people of Ontario. We are entitled to those answers and we cannot even get to first base with this Minister of the Environment.

I guess he is too busy in Washington, DC, taking on the ghost of Ronald Reagan. I guess he is too busy in Buffalo, New York, filing petitions personally with the New York Supreme Court. I guess he is too busy in Detroit making some submission to the Detroit city council about its incinerator.

But what about us in Ontario when our health and safety is at risk and he is off on foreign shores

fighting battles that will earn him headlines? What about our health and safety? What about his primary responsibility here in Ontario to protect us?

Then he refuses 13 times in this Legislature today to even start the dialogue which will reveal his conduct and his sense of priorities as the Minister of the Environment on this most important issue affecting the health and safety of the people of Ontario.

Being a minister is more than getting headlines; being a minister is more than picking a fight with the Americans or the people of Detroit. It is more than taking media tours of Buffalo, New York. It is more than going to Ottawa and attacking the federal government.

1550

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. The member's time is up.

Mr Pope: It has to do with ministerial responsibility to the people of Ontario.

Mrs Sullivan: I am pleased to participate in this debate. I believe this is a matter of serious concern.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs Sullivan: I understand the issues that have been raised by the members of the opposition in terms of this debate as being serious. I believe the matter of discussion before us today is not only a matter for debate in this House at this time on this day, but a matter that will be before us in the future and in the future of our children.

I think one of the issues that has not been explored adequately so far in the discussion is that there is an investigation and that investigation is not yet complete. I believe it is also important to know that those investigations are part of a multiorganizational, a calculated and co-ordinated effort to stop toxic waste haulers bringing materials into Ontario.

The Leader of the Opposition earlier said that if it were true that the minister suspected that toxic waste was being hauled into Ontario, he should have immediately come to the House, he should have made statements to auto owners, home owners, people who mow lawns and so on about his suspicions. In my view, the responsibility of the minister was to get at the truth before coming into the House with those kinds of suspicions, with information that had come to him in any way.

I believe that it was important for him, before coming to the House on the basis of suspicions,

to have launched investigations and to have ensured that those investigations were taken forward in the fullest, most responsible manner possible. I believe that is what the minister is doing and what his ministry is doing. I think it is important that the minister be seen, following adequate information as a result of raids which were conducted in April in Niagara and St Lawrence, to be investigating and determining full investigations.

We know that already there have been three investigations of Ontario facilities following the April raids. We know that if it is warranted after those investigations, charges will be laid under the Environmental Protection Act. I think we should also remember that in December 1986 the EPA was strengthened, and that means that if charges are laid, if prosecutions are found to be valid, fines and jail sentences will follow. I think it is also important that ministry officials work with cross-border agencies to ensure that prosecutions of haulers will be pursued to the maximum, and already 23 investigations of haulers have been launched as a result of the April border raids.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs Sullivan: Once again, our ministry officials will be working to ensure that prosecutions will be pursued to the maximum, not only in our jurisdiction but in theirs. When those investigations are complete, when the information is full, when we know what threats exist, when we know what guilt exists, that is when charges will be laid and that is when the minister indeed should be speaking to the people of Ontario about what to put in their lawn mowers.

I want to talk a bit about action for the future. The government had decided earlier this year, members will recall from further discussions, to outfit a mobile toxic waste unit, an investigations field unit, if you like. That unit will include officials from the investigation and enforcement branch of the ministry with a special mobilized van with highly technical equipment which is now being outfitted, to pursue on our roads at way stations, at the plant gates of processors and waste handlers, trucks hauling material that might include illegal waste. That special weapons and tactical team will be on the roads of Ontario this summer and that SWAT team, that investigations field unit, will be in addition to ongoing border checks that will continue as a matter of course in co-operation with other jurisdictions.

I believe that kind of action for the future will be very important in assisting to come to terms with the kinds of information which has come to this House and which the minister's officials have been dealing with within their own investigations opportunities. It will provide them with an additional method of dealing with the situation.

I think that, as I have indicated, the issues that have been brought to the House and the way they have been brought are of concern. I believe, however, that the minister is proceeding in the most appropriate way by conducting full investigations and by being prepared to bring charges when the investigations prove that those charges are justified.

Mrs Grier: I think the last participant in this debate has, in her final sentence, homed in on the nub of the issue that is before this House today and which has certainly concerned us on this side; and that is the most appropriate way of dealing with an issue.

There is no dispute about the fact that the Minister of the Environment has been aware, from our information, probably for the last five months or six months of the fact that great quantities of contaminated oil have been coming across the border, were being sold at outlets across southern Ontario and were therefore being used.

The minister made a decision that it was important to investigate, to nail down the kingpins, to have proof of criminal charges and then, presumably, we would have a large announcement and a lot of good publicity and the minister would once again be a hero.

But that was not the only course open to him, because the problem he was faced with and the problem where he made the judgement that he would keep it under wraps—What was at risk was the health of the people of this province. He had to weigh whether the risk to the health of the people of this province was greater than the desirability of keeping the investigation under wraps. We on this side think that when human health is at risk, that has to be the top priority. That is what it is about. The whole debate and our action at question period is because we disagree fundamentally with the judgement made by this minister when faced with that choice. We think that error in judgement he made put at risk the health of the people of this province.

He laid charges after the spot-checks that were done some months ago. He took samples after those spot-checks. If, as a result of that sampling, he found any evidence at all that there were

polychlorinated biphenyls in that contaminated oil, he had a duty to tell the people of this province that there was a possibility their health might be at risk. Surely the minister does not deny that when PCBs and the other substances that are in that oil are burned, they present a considerable problem.

If he needed evidence of judgement that it was in fact the case, surely the dramatic action that was taken after the fire in St-Basile-le-Grand is an example of what action is taken when there is the slightest risk. Much of the material that was at St-Basile was probably smuggled in illegally; it certainly did not have waybills. It is probably the case that much of the material smuggled into this province is stored improperly and stored illegally somewhere and, therefore, the very fact that it is there poses a risk of a similar fire taking place somewhere in Ontario.

1600

Even if it is not burned inadvertently, it is burned daily. It is burned in furnaces, in homes, in industries, in offices, in apartment buildings, and if any of those furnaces leak, then the fumes of that improperly burned material are ingested by human beings.

It is burned in vehicles, which puts at risk those of us who are subject to the emissions from those vehicles, and we know the minister does not check emission controls on vehicles very well. It puts at risk the workers who may be dealing with those combustion engines.

Contaminated oil is burned in greenhouses. What does that do to the products of those greenhouses? It is burned in hospitals. It is burned in industries. The exposure is very great.

Lest the minister try to argue that we do not know what the exposure is and that it is limited, let me remind him of reports that were put out by the International Joint Commission just last year talking about the airborne substances that are deposited in our lakes, on our farm land and in our cities all the time. Let me remind him that those studies found that even though PCBs have been out of production since 1970, 2,500 kilograms of PCBs a year are deposited in the Great Lakes and at least 50 per cent of those are expected to come from atmospheric sources, so those PCBs that are coming out of the contaminated oil that the minister is allowing to be burned in our automobiles are landing on our lakes and ending up in our sediments, ending up in the fish, ending up in the wildlife and perhaps ending up in our water.

Certainly in our conversations today with representatives of the Environmental Protection

Agency in the United States and its chemical assessment group, we had unquestioned confirmation that the burning of the substances in this contaminated oil, which they recognize is a major problem in the United States and which they have known about for some time, is a health risk. They also pointed out to us that in the United States there is strict regulation of home heating oil, something that we have not heard in this province.

The error in judgement was in not weighing significantly in the balance the human health risks. The other error in judgement was in not affording sufficient importance to this particular risk.

I think back to the occasions when the minister has deemed that there has been a significant risk and therefore action needed to be taken. He phased out the spraying of roads with contaminated oil. He lauded himself earlier today for having done that. Obviously, he recognized there was a risk. There was a risk from this contaminated oil which he has known for several months is coming into the province, so he phased out spraying it on the roads.

Is there not also a risk when that oil is used in other ways, and why did he not recognize that particular risk?

He says he needs to have proof and he needs to lay charges. I would remind him, as I have many times, that when there are leaks into the St Clair River, he frequently does not lay charges and he often does not have proof of the amount or the nature of the leak, but he closes the water intake pipes in Wallaceburg and Walpole Island because he knows there may be a risk to the health of those people who drink that drinking water.

Hon Mr Bradley: They are reported spills.

Mrs Grier: A reported spill? Does the minister mean that he is denying that there was reported contaminated oil? He knew in his checks in April. There were 118 checks done and samples taken. If the minister, when he participates in this debate—and we have all been waiting all day to hear him say something of substance—is going to tell us that it is only an allegation and that there is no contaminated oil in this province, then why on earth has he not said so before? He certainly has not said so up to this point.

The third error in judgement that I think this minister has made is in the allocation of ministry resources when he knew there was a problem. Has he had enough investigators to do the job I am sure he is going to tell us needs to be done? If the investigation has taken this long and he is still unsure that there is proof of contaminated oil,

why has he not allocated the total resources of his ministry to investigating this problem and to coming up with the proof, or in reassuring the people of this province that there was not in fact a risk?

We have an allocation of resources so frequently by this government on things that it deems to be important. We have, as someone has said, two chemical wars being fought in this province. We have the war against chemical substances and drug dependency, and we seem to have unlimited resources to put up against that particular fight. We have announcements periodically of what is being done to fight drugs when they are coming in with criminal associations and when they are being used by our young people in this province. Surely, the chemicals that are being put illegally, and maybe by the kingpins to whom the minister refers, into oil that is being burnt all across southern Ontario justifies just the same allocation of resources, justifies being accorded just the same degree of importance and, much more important, justifies action and information from the Minister of the Environment so that we the people of the province can make a determination of what the risk is.

We can decide where we want to buy our gasoline. We can decide where we want to buy our home heating oil. This minister has not even shared with us the names of the companies whose trucks he investigated at his checkpoints and from which he took samples which he found to be contaminated.

The people of this province deserve better from the minister. They deserve to know the risks to which they are being put and they need some full information. They need to know, above all, when the minister knew that this was a problem. That is the answer we are still waiting for, the question we are going to ask again and the question that we think it is about time the minister answered.

Mrs Marland: In rising to discuss this matter of urgent and pressing concern, namely, the public health threat that exists in Ontario as a result of the illegal distribution and sale of contaminated fuels and the failure of the Minister of the Environment to move to protect public health although knowing of the threats for several months, may I say at the outset that we should be very clear about what this emergency debate is about.

I was astounded a few minutes ago to hear the House leader for this Liberal government stand in this House and say that the Minister of the Environment has acted very responsibly. I hope

the House leader will not be proven as wrong as he may be. I hope, when this government House leader says that the government will be judged by the public—

Interjection.

Mrs Marland:—that he recognizes very well that we in the opposition parties of this Legislature know that, yes, the Liberal government of Ontario will be judged by the public. When that judgement comes, fortunately, those members who are at this point interjecting my speech will be gone. The reason they interject is always the same: As soon as you hit home with the truth, they have to run to the defence of their Liberal members.

In case we are in doubt as to the subject that we are dealing with today, I would like at the outset to refer to the Facts publication of the Ministry of the Environment. The Facts publication says, in fact, under the subject of polychlorinated biphenyls, namely PCBs:

“In Ontario, PCBs are carefully controlled and supervised. Detailed advice on handling, control and emergency action is provided by the ministries of Labour and the Environment to protect workers and the public.”

If PCBs do not put workers and the public at risk, then why is that description presented in the Facts publication of the Ministry of the Environment?

Why does the member for Halton Centre (Mrs Sullivan) stand up and say there is an investigation? Why does she stand up and say, in her view, the minister is right to get at the truth before coming to the House with suspicions? Why does she refer to the April raids that were in fact advertised by this Minister of the Environment by his comments on radio and television so that when the raids took place to investigate this subject, everybody was well-warned and well-prepared?

It is very interesting to think about when this kind of information should be brought to the public. It is very interesting to note that if there is any other risk to the public—I might give as an example if there is just a suspicion of a bomb risk—do we wait until it is proven? No, we do not. We evacuate aircraft, airports and in fact whole sections of communities if there is a suspicion. If it is suspected the public is at risk, normally a responsible government will protect that public.

1610

It is not as though we are dealing with the Minister of Transportation or the Minister of Municipal Affairs. We are dealing with the Minister of the Environment, the very person

whose mandate it is to protect the environment and those of us who live in it. Lest we have any doubts about polychlorinated biphenyls, I also want to quote from another government publication: “PCBs have been shown to cause brain, nerve, liver and skin disorders in humans and cancer in lab animals. Furans and dioxins are produced when PCBs are incompletely burned and are even more dangerous.”

If the government itself says that furans and dioxins are produced when PCBs are burned incompletely and are then even more dangerous, how is it that we have a Minister of the Environment who sees fit not to answer questions even today in this House? This Minister of the Environment was asked 13 times how long he had known of this risk, how long he had known these facts that may be putting the public of Ontario at risk.

Since he will not give the facts, perhaps it falls upon us to do that. We know the Environment minister was told early last year by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation that contaminated fuel shipments into Canada were being investigated. We also know the Buffalo police, who specialize in organized crime, had been investigating toxic fuel sales for two months. The Minister of the Environment boasted in this House on Monday that he had been tackling this crime secretly for several months. He also said in this Legislature on Monday that the Ontario Provincial Police were involved.

This Minister of the Environment was so secret that the Solicitor General told the Legislature yesterday, Tuesday, that the Ontario Provincial Police were not involved in any investigation regarding tainted fuel, and also that Canada customs was not aware that the Ontario government had suspected for more than four months that toxic-waste-laced fuel was crossing the border. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police was apparently also in the dark and have now been called into the investigation.

I cannot accept what has gone on in this Legislature this week, the fact that on Monday the Minister of the Environment says the Ontario Provincial Police are involved, that on Tuesday the Solicitor General stands in this House and says the OPP are not involved and that today when we ask the Minister of the Environment the very simple question of how long he has known of this risk and this problem, he will not answer the question.

I am quoting from Hansard of Monday and Tuesday of this week. If anybody wants to check my quotations they are welcome to do so. The

truth of the matter is that we in this Legislature are being pushed around like children in kindergarten. We in this Legislature are not being treated equally or fairly. Worst of all, the people of Ontario are not being given information they have a right to. The people in Ontario have a right to know what is going on and we are their advocates. It is we who are asking the questions and it is this Liberal government that chooses not to inform the public of Ontario.

The fact is that this minister has engaged in the worst kind of political heroism imaginable. To gain some kind of recognition for his police work, the minister has put his political ambitions above the health and safety of the community. Knowing that the health and safety of the people were being put at risk, the minister chose personally not to inform the public. This is totally inexcusable and totally unacceptable.

If the Minister of the Environment does not advocate for the people in this province in terms of health and safety related to the environment, then I have to ask who does. Certainly not the Premier of this province who laughed and smiled all through the 13 questions that were asked in this Legislature this afternoon. That will never be shown on television, but those of us who sit on this side of the House during those 13 questions witnessed at first hand the concern of the Premier of this Liberal government in Ontario today.

This is unacceptable to me, to the Progressive Conservative caucus in this Legislature and to the people of Ontario and I call on the Minister of the Environment to tender his resignation immediately.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr M. C. Ray): Order, please. I remind all honourable members that there is ample time for all views to get expressed here in accordance with the rules. We have ten-minute speeches lasting from now until 6 pm. I am sure the persons with the floor would very much appreciate the attention of the House while they speak.

Mr McClelland: I am delighted to join in this debate of very serious consequence this afternoon, offer my comments and offer comments on behalf of my government today.

I want to say at the outset to my friend the member for Mississauga South (Mrs Marland), whom I hold in great personal admiration, that the Premier of this province takes environmental concerns and the issues facing us in this House today very seriously. Indeed, that seriousness and the priority he places on the issue of environmental concerns is demonstrated by the

minister he has charged with the responsibility of fulfilling that responsibility in his government. I would say to my friend from Mississauga South that there is no Minister of the Environment in this country, either currently or previously, who has demonstrated the commitment as an environmentalist, the concern and consistent standards for the environment as has the current minister.

When I reflect on the poor state of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment just a few years ago, when we took over in 1985, and look at the excellent job that has been done from 1985 until the present time, tackling major concerns, including this one and many others, about environmental problems throughout Ontario, I think the record will speak for itself.

I have every confidence—I sat this to my friend—that the people of this province will judge our government, not only on this but on other matters but most certainly on this matter, on the way we have addressed environmental concerns, on the way we have placed them as priority items, and on the way we have moved the Ministry of the Environment into a top ministry in priorities and planning and made it a senior ministry for the first time in the history of this province. When the appropriate time comes, I have no doubt the people of this province will remember and reflect very favourably not only on the government generally, but on the minister who is fulfilling those responsibilities today.

When I listen to the criticism that is so loosely thrown about—if I might say, liberally thrown about—by the member for Mississauga South, I think we should not forget that prior to 1985 the previous government either flat-lined, or in fact from time to time reduced, the budget at the Ministry of the Environment. We are in the process right now of doubling the investigations and enforcement branch.

Miss Martel: Talk about the health and safety concerns before us.

Mr Wiseman: Are you concerned at all?

Mr McClelland: I want to say to my friends opposite who are trying to make their comments heard, and they too will have their opportunity, that 15 people were employed in the investigations and enforcement branch only four years ago. We now have 96 people in that branch, and I want to say that we are in the process of doubling that to deal with some of the serious issues we have in terms of investigation and enforcement.

We have some of the toughest laws in this province. We demonstrated that by raising the fines from \$10,000 to a maximum now of up to \$500,000 for the most serious offences.

I want to say to my friends opposite, who are very quick to come up with questions about judgement, that it seems to me that in dealing with something of this severity, it should be handled in a careful, prudent, thoughtful manner. Investigations of a criminal nature that are as serious as they are must be dealt with appropriately.

1620

I want to say to the members and to the people of this province that the Ontario government is doing all it can within its jurisdiction. This government notified Environment Canada. I think my friend should know that, in spite of what he said on the record. I say this to him with respect, that he should perhaps check his facts a little more clearly.

Our government notified Environment Canada. Our government notified customs officials. In fact, customs allowed the Ministry of the Environment of this province to use its facilities in the border areas. The federal government has major responsibility under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act. They were advised and they co-operated in our efforts and our undertaking.

I think my friend has a curious version of the facts, I say to my friend the member for Mississauga South. Border raids were not advertised. It is inevitable that from time to time when border raids are undertaken they become known. They become known to truckers. They do have communication. In fact, that is one of the difficulties in an investigation of this nature. It is because of this that a systematic, well-thought-out, well-planned investigation was undertaken and continues to proceed at the present time.

Let me also say that inevitably, as these things become public knowledge, they act as a significant deterrent. I do not think that fact would be lost on my friend. As it becomes known that border raids are being conducted, that is a deterrent. Certainly, that is one positive step that can be and was taken to curtail the flow of contaminated fuels in dealing with those allegations we heard.

If allegations are present, it seems that the prudent course of action is to act on those allegations, to investigate, to gather the data and to proceed in a wise fashion to the ultimate conclusion, to deal with the issue in a substantive and complete manner.

I noted in today's Toronto Star the headline, and I have it here: "Customs Officials Surprised to Learn of Toxic Fuel Probe." The newspaper states that Steve Sloan, chief of investigation for

Revenue Canada, which oversees customs, said that he was unaware of the allegations. He may very well have been unaware, but I want to tell members and the people of this province what in fact happened.

We know the customs officials on the border in 1988 and again in 1989 not only knew about our efforts, but co-operated and assisted us. They knew and wanted to help us to track all kinds of wastes and their illegal movements. They provided facilities and space on their property to do so. To say the least, and I say this charitably, we find it unusual that customs for Revenue Canada was unaware of Ontario's attempts to stop the international trade in illegal chemicals. In fact, they assisted us in our investigations.

Let us place this, then, in the context of the situation that we have currently in the debate before the House today. We, as the Liberal government, have made a systematic effort to build upon the capacity we have at the Ministry of the Environment, not only to catch polluters and stop polluters at their source but to also deal with them in appropriate prosecutions. In stopping toxic waste haulers, we want to provide a model in this province. Our efforts, I think, will be seen to be a model of how to deal with it in terms of the border.

Mr Wildman: You are talking about waste haulers rather than fuel haulers.

Mr McClelland: I say to my friend the member for Algoma that as he would be well aware, as we look at things that are crossing the border and materials that cross border points, we do a general investigation.

It seems to me we have a responsibility that goes beyond just this one issue, although this is a very important issue. We will continue to deal with all materials coming across the border and we will continue to do that in a systematic way. We will continue to ensure that our investigations and enforcement branch is in place, properly equipped and properly trained to handle those problems.

We have built that capacity and we will continue to build that capacity out of the dust of the days of the provincial Tories, who did not support enforcement investigation. I say with some regret that these efforts were not supported by equal federal efforts. I ask my friends opposite to talk to their federal friends, to ask them to look at the kind of work we are doing and to continue to co-operate and help us with that.

I have a challenge to put to my friends opposite. Instead of criticizing at every turn and instead of from time to time standing back with

great piety and talking about the failures they perceive, knowing full well that a systematic, strong investigative procedure is under way and will be followed through to its conclusion, I ask them to back up a little bit, to look at the efforts and to really put the environmental concerns of the people of this province at the fore, and to help and support the initiatives of this government, initiatives that, I say to my friends, are unparalleled in the history of this province, in this country and I would suggest, in North America. I think we can be very proud.

Mr Brandt: Oh no, the world. World-class, isn't it?

Mr McClelland: I say to the leader of the third party that it is indeed world-class and very appropriate for him to say that. I thank him for recognizing that and drawing to the attention of the people of this province the outstanding job that is being done by this ministry. I ask our friends in the third party to convey to their counterparts in Ottawa the importance of joining Ontario's efforts in catching any polluters and preventing any contamination of our fuels and environment from illegal activity in this province.

As this matter goes through a debate today and we are given an opportunity to hear various views expressed in this House, I am confident that the record of our government will prove, not only to members here today but also to the people of Ontario, to be one we can be proud of. I am proud of our minister and proud of the job we are doing and will continue to do to ensure the safety of the people of this province through the Ministry of the Environment.

The Acting Speaker: The next speaker with a right to address the assembly without interruption is the member for Hamilton Mountain.

Mr Charlton: Everybody who has got up so far this afternoon has referred to the importance of the issue being debated here today. I want to refocus somewhat and re-emphasize the importance of this issue. I listened carefully, for example, to the member for Brampton North (Mr McClelland) who just spoke. I want him, as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment, to perhaps return the courtesy and I ask him to listen very carefully to what I have to say this afternoon.

The Minister of the Environment and the officials in his ministry have either been totally irresponsible and negligent in the handling of this affair or they have been plain outright stupid. This situation is a prime example of what we have all complained about for 100 years, of one

department of government not knowing what the other is doing and nobody gleaning any benefit from the other public expenditures that are going on.

Let's start at the beginning of this issue. We have contaminants being brought into Ontario in diesel oil and heating oil. Why are they mixing contaminants with those two particular kinds of oil? It is very simple. If you have ever had a leak in your furnace, you know that home heating oil stinks. So too does diesel oil. They are very good commodities for masking the existence of other things that have been added. Also, though, they are much easier to trace if you are investigating than any number of other substances that could be and are smuggled into this country.

1630

The minister and the member for Brampton North have talked to us about the random border checks they did last month after supposedly having learned of this potential scam in January, and there is nothing wrong with the random border checks. At some point in this issue, we are going to have to cut off the source of supply of contaminated oil.

But we have all referred in this debate this afternoon, including the member for Brampton North, to the potential dangers to residents of Ontario from the use of this contaminated oil in the province. Have they told us in one line anywhere, in anything they have said to us today, what they have done to try to locate the supply that already exists in this province? They are not going to locate it at the border; it is already here.

What should the Minister of the Environment have done in January, when he learned about this contaminated oil scam?

First, in every major urban centre in this province, we have segments of an organized crime task force, organized crime task forces that are made up locality by locality by members of the local police force, members of the OPP and members of the RCMP. Those organized crime task forces are working on a full-time, permanent basis, investigating the operations of organized crime in Ontario.

The minister himself has told us clearly that organized crime is involved in this operation in terms of both importing and distributing contaminated oil in Ontario. The very first place the minister and his officials should have gone, even before they dreamed about border checks, was to the organized crime task forces in this province to find out what they knew, what names they could provide, what company names they could provide, what locations might be checked out by

ministry checkers, in terms of sampling supplies in depots. None of that was done. None of that was done. None of that was done.

Mr McClelland: Do you know that?

Mr Charlton: I repeated it three times because I know that. When the government is prepared to stand up and give us the facts to the contrary, we will be happy to listen.

But this government has ignored, as the Solicitor General told us clearly in this House yesterday, this minister and his ministry have ignored an apparatus which is sitting out there available for their use and, as a result, have or may have put the health of any number of Ontario citizens at risk.

In addition to the organized crime task forces, the Ministry of the Environment has been working for a number of years on the question of the destruction of PCBs in Ontario by incineration. The work this ministry has done, the tests it has run, the information that is available in the ministry about the problems and dangers that result from the process of incinerating PCBs, one of which is the reference that was made by the member for Mississauga South earlier in her comments, which is the conversion of PCBs through incomplete combustion to dioxins and furans—but it is only one of the problems, as the ministry is well aware.

The ministry is fully aware of the problems, for example, of trying to burn PCB-contaminated oil in a furnace that was installed in a house in 1968, a furnace of which there are hundreds of thousands across this province, which are extremely inefficient and extremely incapable of providing the kind of safe combustion that would be required. Those furnaces not only would allow some PCBs to escape out the chimney but as well create dioxins and furans in the process.

The same is true of almost every apartment building and hospital boiler system in this province, because the vast majority of those buildings were built in the 1960s and early 1970s, before any of the present scientific knowledge was available. All of those, into which some of this contaminated oil is obviously finding its way—these guys are not running a business for nothing—create a substantial health risk for people in this province.

What did the ministry do—and perhaps this is another thing it would like to relate to us before this debate is over instead of stonewalling in terms of facts—to try to determine where the supplies went in Ontario and how they were being used?

That brings up the third part of the issue, the issue of public knowledge. The minister has taken the position that only allegations existed and therefore it was not time to create any kind of public concern, when the reality is that exactly the opposite is true. If the Ministry of the Environment had been working in conjunction with the other authorities of this government and been really interested in finding out where that oil went and how it was being used, the only way that was possible was to create public knowledge.

There are likely all kinds of users of either diesel oil or heating oil in this province who bought cheap loads unaware of what that oil contained, but certainly public knowledge of the problem, and a request to the public that anybody with any knowledge or any reason to believe that oil they had purchased might be contaminated should contact the Ministry of the Environment or the OPP, may in fact have elicited some clear information about where and how that oil was being used.

Keeping the whole thing under tight wraps just allowed the process to continue unfettered and all the ministry could find in its wealth of potential for tracing this material was the random border checks on four occasions at Niagara and the St Lawrence crossings, random checks which may or may not find anything. We agree that has to continue, but the ministry has failed to provide protection for the people of this province.

Mr Brandt: I engage in this debate this afternoon with some reluctance, although I fully recognize the importance of the motion having been brought forward and in fact my party did table a similar motion, albeit a few short minutes after the New Democratic Party had tabled its motion with the Speaker's office.

That set aside, I think the importance of this particular issue is well known to all of the members of the House, because the matter is not only being debated here in this Legislative Assembly but is in fact being debated, as the members know, in the House of Commons in Ottawa. There are a number of questions that have to be answered. Members have been raising these questions today.

I say that I am somewhat reluctant to engage in this debate because perhaps it would not have been necessary had the Minister of the Environment simply responded directly to a series of question in regard to the issue of when he first became informed of the matter of the contaminated oil and fuel products being shipped from New York state into Ontario.

I want to tell the members it is a little bit frustrating on this side of the House to ask what one thinks to be a responsible question, namely, when was the minister aware of the shipments being made, and to have nothing but a wall of words constructed around the minister where he does a lot of verbal gymnastics but refuses, for reasons that I am only suspicious about at the moment with respect to why he would not, to come clean with us and directly respond to those particular questions.

I have to tell the members the concern that we have in this particular party, and I believe it is shared by the other opposition party as well. We want to know how extensive these particular shipments from New York state into Ontario were; when the minister was first informed; what the level of contamination of these toxic substances is, and what has happened, I say to the members of the government, with the so-called spot checks that they were to take, according to their press release dated 20 April.

1640

It indicates very clearly two things: number one, the kind of rhetoric we have been hearing from that side of the House, and number two, an unfulfilled commitment in this very press release, which I am going to read into the record today. This press release is on behalf of the Ministry of the Environment, presumably with the minister's imprimatur on it.

It says: "We are conducting these surprise border checks to let toxic waste haulers know that we have our eye on them and that lawbreakers will be caught and prosecuted," Environment minister Jim Bradley said."

Further, if one reads this press release carefully—are members ready for this?—"Samples of waste loads from liquid bulk carriers and transporters of solid and liquid waste were taken and analysed at the ministry's mobile lab. More detailed analysis will be completed later at the ministry's main laboratory."

That is fine. I do not disagree with that, other than that this press release was dated 13 April.

Mr Haggerty: You know where that is.

Mr Brandt: Not only do I know where it is, but it is a ministry that I formerly had the honour of running at one particular time. I can tell my friends opposite that it does not take a month to undergo these particular types of tests and to get the results back and to share them with the people of Ontario. If in fact we are dealing with dangerous levels of contamination, which is very likely from the information we have at the moment—

An hon member: Allegations.

Mr Brandt: Allegations, certainly, but allegations supported by certain evidence that is coming forward as a result of investigative measures that have been undertaken in the state of New York. Police authorities are looking at this matter in some detail, as members know, but the issue is: How do these particular transport carriers get into Ontario rather unmolested when we have an Environment minister who has increased his staff for this particular type of policing from 18 to about 95 people?

What is the minister doing with that huge new staff? I guess they are running around issuing press releases, because the results bear no relationship to the kind of rhetoric that we see contained in these particular press releases.

Let me tell my friends the bottom line. A minister of any portfolio in the government has a responsibility to inform the people of Ontario if he or she even suspects that there is a danger to the health and safety of the citizens of this province. There is no option. That is what a responsible minister must do.

The only option available to the Minister of the Environment, if he was suspicious about contaminated loads of this particular type of blended fuel coming into Ontario, is what he did in another press release when he talked about bringing to bear the weight of the ministry on two loads of pathological waste.

It is interesting the kind of verbal games we get into in this forum, because when I raised that question with the minister I said, "You know, it is very possible that the pathological waste could be less toxic and less severe in terms of its potential impact on the environment than the types of chemical substances we are dealing with in these particular loads of fuel." The minister in his response to my question of course picked up on that and he said, "Well, I hope the member is not suggesting that pathological waste is unimportant or is not a critical matter." I am hoping I am paraphrasing him reasonably fairly.

The fact of the matter is that is not what I said. The point I was trying to make is that we could be dealing with a matter far more serious than pathological waste here. We certainly are dealing with a matter far more serious in terms of the tax impact, because even the Provincial Auditor has indicated that as much as \$100 million annually could be lost to Ontario as a result of the way in which these particular haulers happen to be able to evade their tax responsibilities and obligations.

In addition to that, we have some of the deadliest chemicals known to mankind that could be contained in these particular shipments. For the members opposite, let me tell them, octochlorodioxins, dibenzofurans and PCBs are chemicals that have been contained in things like Agent Orange which was suspected in Vietnam as being one of the carcinogenics that has caused a number of American soldiers to come back from that particular war with very critical health problems related again directly to dioxins and furans.

How do dioxins and furans form? I am sure the members all know that it is as a result of the combustion of PCBs. When you burn PCBs, you get dioxins and furans as a direct chemical byproduct of that. It is interesting to note that this is a government which, through all of the sophistication of modern technology, through all of the knowledge that we have at the moment with respect to the disposal of PCBs, has said: "It's not safe. We can't incinerate it. We don't know how to do it. We're not going to allow it. We're not going to legislate approval for it."

Mr Villeneuve: What did they do?

Mr Brandt: "What did they do?" my colleague asks. They have allowed it to come across the border contained in a blended fuel product.

I only have about a minute and 20 seconds left and I want to say that what is the most astounding thing in this entire issue that has developed within the last few days is the reluctance on the part of the Minister of the Environment to even bring into his confidence the federal Minister of the Environment, Lucien Bouchard.

Mr McClelland: He did that yesterday.

Mr Brandt: He did it yesterday. I think it is an insult to my intelligence to tell me that he did it yesterday. The Minister of the Environment has known for some months about this particular contaminant coming into our jurisdiction. He knew it two months ago. He should have told the federal Minister of the Environment two months ago.

An hon member: He did.

Mr Brandt: He did not tell him two months ago.

An hon member: Read about it.

Mr Brandt: I have read the same stories the member has read. I found out today that the reading level of—I will not get into that.

I want to say to the members opposite in the few minutes left to me that is a matter that involves the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, the RCMP and the OPP, in spite of what the

Solicitor General said yesterday. The Minister of the Environment said the OPP was involved. It involves the SWAT team, if you will, of the Ministry of the Environment in Ontario. It involves other agencies as well in New York state.

We need a co-operative undertaking to stop this kind of scam immediately. Our party demands that the Minister of the Environment come clean with the information he has. Nothing less is acceptable to this party.

The Acting Speaker: The next speaker is the member for Kingston and The Islands and I hope members will listen carefully to him.

Mr Keyes: It is a pleasure for me to have an opportunity to stand on behalf of the government and be able to say that I too can applaud what has been the action taken by the minister with regard to, and may I remind all members, the alleged event that fuels contaminated with hazardous waste are being brought into Ontario.

Some of the honourable members on the opposite side of the House today have expressed, and I quote their words, "shock," "outrage" and what have you about the reluctance of the minister to answer the question, "When did you know?" If these same honourable members from both parties on the opposite side of the House were seriously concerned about this issue on the basis of real environmental and health concerns, surely they would be more interested in knowing what the minister is doing about the allegations that fuels contaminated with hazardous waste are being smuggled into Ontario. Surely that would be there, but they are not interested in knowing what he is doing; they are only interested in knowing when he knew something.

Let me tell members that the Ministry of Health, of which I have the pleasure to be the parliamentary assistant, is concerned about the allegations that fuels contaminated with hazardous wastes are being smuggled into Ontario, because possible human exposure to toxic chemicals is a significant public health concern.

1650

We heard a few moments ago the great concern about border checks. May I simply say that border checks are only one aspect of a much broader, far-ranging investigation into these alleged illegal practices by certain individuals. In my all-too-short period of time in another ministry responsible for many an investigation, one must remember that investigations are very broad and wide-ranging. Therefore, the border checks referred to are only one aspect of an ongoing investigation.

The provincial government is moving as quickly as it can on the leads and information it has been given. All members of this House have had an opportunity either here directly or through other media to follow the government's action in the last few days since becoming aware of this illegal act. I know the majority of the members of this House applauds the action of this minister; that I know. Of course, there are minorities who do not, but in any issue there are minorities who do not agree with the majority.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Keyes: We know, as I said in the beginning of my comments, these are only allegations to date. We have no firm confirmation on what possible health effects may be involved in this issue. We are awaiting confirmation from laboratory test results that are being conducted by the Ministry of the Environment. The environmental laboratory is now testing samples taken from trucks that entered Canada from the United States across three Niagara River bridges in mid-April. The technicians are testing for a variety of hazardous substances—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. May I remind all members on both sides of the House of the standing order that says we recognize one member at a time, and if members want to participate, it is one after another, not all at the same time. The member for Kingston and The Islands.

Mr Keyes: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have been wrestling for some hours in the preparation of these comments, and as a result, I want to be sure that they are heard and listened to by all members of the House. But I can easily overlook any interjections, because they do not deter me at all from my purpose at hand.

As I was saying in the middle of my comments before, the technicians in these laboratories are testing for a variety of hazardous substances, including the polychlorinated biphenyls, the pesticides and all those fine names which I know the former Minister of the Environment has not forgotten since his days in that office.

The responsibility to investigate any effects on human health from substances like contaminated fuel is shared jointly by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of the Environment. As members will appreciate, we cannot conduct any rational and meaningful health effects investigation until we learn what substance has come in,

how much has come in, what type and what happened to it.

We in the Ministry of Health and on this side of the House are as concerned as anyone about protecting the environmental health of the people of Ontario, and that is why the Minister of the Environment is attempting to determine the nature and extent of the problem and stop it at its source. We have first to find out the concentrations of the toxins, if they were brought in and where they were dumped or where they were burned.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Keyes: Obviously contaminants vary greatly in their potential effect on human health, depending on their toxicity and the route and duration of their exposure to the public. When we receive this information, I can assure the members of this House that we will endeavour to assess the effects that this alleged illegal practice has had on the health of the people of Ontario.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Keyes: The public health system in Ontario has very important responsibilities in protecting the public from environmental health hazards. The Health Protection and Promotion Act of 1983 gives local medical officers of health the authority to investigate hazards under sections 11 and 12. The Ministry of Health provides funding and consultation to support these efforts.

The chief medical officer of health, under the direction of the minister, may investigate and act with regard to such hazards. The Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) has been proactive in giving medical officers of health direction in dealing with environmental health concerns. The newly revised mandatory health program and services announced by the Minister of Health on 14 April require local boards of health to play a stronger role in this area.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Keyes: The possible human exposure to toxic chemicals like polychlorinated biphenyls, dioxin and furans is a significant public health concern. The first priority has to be to stop the exposure to such elements as quickly as possible—this is the responsibility of the Ministry of the Environment—by stopping the shipment of potentially contaminated fuel. The responsibility to investigate any human health impact from the contaminated fuel will be a joint responsibility of the ministries of Health and the Environment.

When this information, obtained from the testing in our laboratories, is available, it may be possible to investigate whether this contaminated fuel did indeed constitute a human health hazard. When we obtain this information—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Keyes: —the Ministry of Health will conduct a thorough investigation into possible health effects, as it did in the case of contaminated wine, as it did in the case of contaminated mussels and as it did in the case of Chilean grapes. We will take action to protect the public of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: Before we proceed with the next member, may I remind all members again to give all other members, and especially the member addressing the House, more respect. I would appreciate that.

Mr Epp: Hear that, Andy, hear that?

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I said all members of the House without any exclusion. The member for Algoma.

Mr Wildman: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate your comments because I believe this is a very important debate and I frankly, on this occasion, agree somewhat with some of the comments made by the government House leader at the outset when the discussion was whether or not this debate should proceed.

From time to time it has been suggested that members might file motions on emergencies for debate so that the ordinary business of the House could be set aside, and many people might question from time to time whether or not all of these are indeed emergent, but there is no question today that the question before the House is indeed a matter of emergency, as the government House leader himself admitted.

1700

Mr Speaker, we get used to some of the barracking back and forth in the House, because that is the way things operate, and I appreciate your attempts to ensure that this is limited. But on a debate of this importance, I think it is unfortunate if it degenerates to the point where it just becomes some kind of political stratagem rather than dealing with what is a matter of real import in Ontario, dealing with not only the possible environmental impacts of contaminants being burned in vehicles on our highways, in furnaces, in public buildings, in homes and in businesses, but also a possible real threat to the public health in this province.

I must admit that as I listened to the interventions of members of the government party in this debate, I got more and more confused. As I see it, there are two very important issues before the House this afternoon. The first one is, what did the minister know or suspect, when did he know it or suspect it and what did he tell other authorities that should have been informed so that the matter could be properly investigated?

The second question before the House is, how should the minister proceed in order to protect the public health in Ontario? Should the minister keep his own counsel or keep it private among investigative authorities in an attempt to determine the source of the contaminant and to capture the perpetrators of what is in fact a very serious crime; or should he inform the public so that they can protect themselves from possible adverse effects, both environmental and health?

Obviously, we on this side of the House believe that it is important to determine the source of hazardous waste and improper disposal of that waste and, if someone is breaking the law, to capture those perpetrators and bring them to justice; but it is even more important to protect the health of the public, that is what is important today in this debate.

The last speaker who participated in the debate, the member for Kingston and The Islands (Mr Keyes), made a lot of the fact that these are, in his words, only allegations. I suppose until they are proven, yes indeed they are allegations.

Mr Laughren: Serious allegations.

Mr Wildman: But they are indeed very serious allegations. I am sure if that member were responsible, as he once was, for the public safety in this province and he received information that someone had planted a bomb in a public building and it was indeed just an allegation, he would not wait until the bomb went off before telling anybody. He would evacuate the building.

He says that we should investigate the possible health effects of any of these allegations and determine whether in fact they are well-founded before warning the public. If that is the attitude that member had when he was the Solicitor General of this province, I will say that it is lucky for everyone in this province that he is no longer in that office.

Also, the approach of the member for Brampton North was "Don't worry, we're in charge," the ministry was carrying out many investigations of improper disposal of hazardous waste and these investigations went back as far as 1988.

At one point he sounded as if he was alleging that the minister knew about this improper use of fuel back in 1988.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Wildman: But then the member for Kingston and The Islands got up almost immediately afterwards and said, and I wrote it down as he said it, that these allegations were only made in the last few days. This is an indication of the kind of doubletalk and baffle-gab we have been getting from the government on this very important issue.

At one point the minister has said, "We've been investigating for a long period of time." At another point, I understand, he has said outside the House that he was first informed in January. It has also been stated by members of the government that the minister informed the federal authorities when he received the information on these allegations. However, the federal minister has said emphatically that it was indeed his department that received the first tip, from either Quebec or Switzerland, and that in fact his department informed the provincial ministry.

At the same time, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has said that it has been investigating a firm in Buffalo that has been suspected of putting hazardous waste into fuel destined for Ontario for over a year and that it informed the ministry at the time it commenced its investigation. Now the question is, and I hope the minister is going to participate in this debate, it is time for him to state in this House clearly when he knew of these allegations. Did the FBI or did the federal department inform him? Then, when he found out about these allegations, whom did he inform? Did he inform the Ontario Provincial Police if he suspected there was criminal involvement?

Mr Reville: The RCMP.

Mr Wildman: Or the RCMP. Yesterday, the Solicitor General for this province said that the OPP were not involved in the investigation of hazardous waste contaminants in fuel; rather they were concerned about revenue issues. If the Solicitor General did not know, perhaps the minister informed the commissioner who did not tell the Solicitor General. That is possible.

Mr Laughren: This is getting confusing.

Mr Wildman: It is very confusing. I think it is important for the minister to make clear here what did he know, when did he know it and whom did he inform and then to explain, beyond that, why he thought it more appropriate to carry

out the investigation in hopes of catching the culprits rather than warning the members of the general public that they might be purchasing discounted but contaminated fuels for their vehicles or homes.

The other question my colleague raises is why he did not stop the shipments. We were told of these border raids that have been carried out, and I suppose the minister will argue that he could not stop the shipments until they had been tested. Well, if he was told in January of these allegations, as he said outside the House, why did the raids take place, not in February, not in March, but in April?

I do not really think the minister has taken this seriously. It is certainly an indication that the government has not taken this seriously. If the minister was hoping to catch the culprits, that is one aim that is important. But in our view it is not nearly as important as protecting the environment of this province—

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Wildman: —and, even more so, the health of the people of the province, which could be exposed while he is carrying out his investigation.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. The member's time is up.

1710

Mr Sterling: I do believe that the emergency debate today was necessary. It is important for the public of Ontario and for this Legislature to consider this issue.

I hope we will not only consider this issue in the present context of this particular environmental hazard which has been allowed to remain a secret until this week; I hope we will also consider it with regard to the potential for this to be repeated in history again and that at the very least this minister and this government will learn they have a responsibility to the public to inform it when another matter like this arises.

The choice that a minister of the crown has when confronted with an issue like this is whether or not to hide behind the veil of a criminal or quasi-criminal investigation and seek enforcement of the laws of the province against those who would transport, in this case toxic material into Canada. That is one choice the minister has.

On the other hand, the minister may make a decision that the public's interest in knowing of the potential hazards of this material is greater than his interest in enforcing that law, and that in disclosing to the public that there is a danger and

that this illegal activity may be taking place he may hinder a criminal investigation that may be under way.

In my view, it appears from the facts that have been put forward to date that the minister has chosen the wrong route in this particular case. This reflects in some part this minister's and this government's attitude with regard to his approach to solving environmental problems in Ontario.

We have seen in the past that this minister likes to play the tough guy, the guy who increases fines in different legislation, which attracts headlines in our press. He likes to prosecute people who would break our environmental laws, and he likes to gain the headlines that he gets from that particular attitude and from that particular activity.

Quite frankly, no one in this Legislature can argue with the fact that environmental hazards and people who break the laws with regard to the environment should be prosecuted and should be fined heavily, but that should not be the only preoccupation of the Minister of the Environment.

In the past four years, we have seen far too great an amount of energy spent by him and his ministry on this aspect. A prosecution does not solve an environmental problem. It brings the perpetrator to trial and perhaps fines him for a particular activity.

What this minister should be concerned about is the health of the public and how he can prevent further environmental dangers to that public in the future.

We have asked 13 or 14 times today, "Minister, when did you know about this particular problem?" We have found now that he knew about this particular problem in January of this year. I believe he could have told the public at that point in time.

As I say, that might have hampered a criminal investigation that is now under way or has been under way for the past two months, but I believe that a warning to the public who would be using the products that may in fact contain PCBs was more important than a criminal investigation and bringing those people to trial.

Hon Mr Wrye: Was he the provincial secretary for justice? Are you serious?

Mr Sterling: I am absolutely serious. The Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations asked me if—

Hon Mr Wrye: I'll give my list of investigations now—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Sterling: I say to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, my priority is public safety first and the prosecution of criminals second. Those are my priorities.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Sterling: My priorities are not to stand up and say, "We prosecuted criminals and we were successful in putting them behind bars."

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Sterling: You are arguing in the opposite way and your Minister of the Environment has exhibited that kind of philosophy over the last four years. Quite frankly, it is losing credibility in the community and it is losing credibility with the public.

The Deputy Speaker: Will the member address his remarks through the Speaker, please?

Mr Sterling: The second point we are hearing this afternoon from the Liberal backbenchers, such as the member for Kingston and The Islands, is whether or not there really is a problem here. Is there a problem?

We are being asked whether or not this is all for nought. "We don't think there is a problem." The member for Kingston and The Islands was saying we have to prove the allegations. I heard a member on my left, when one of the other members of the opposition was speaking, say, and chant: "Prove it, prove it, prove it that there's a problem here."

We have heard before that other ministers in other governments have been willing to act when in fact the potential for damage was far less than the potential for damage that I consider possible here.

Mr Miller: Like Morley Kells?

Mr Sterling: The member across the way talks about the election of 1985 when a Minister of the Environment at that time made a poor decision in reacting to a spill of PCBs in northern Ontario. I disagreed with the Minister of the Environment at that particular time, and I thought he reacted terribly to the situation.

Mr Reycraft: Like Bill 30. He waited too long; he waited until after the election to say something.

Mr Sterling: I will tell this to the member for Middlesex (Mr Reycraft): This minister's reaction to this is worse than the minister's reaction in May 1985 or prior to that time. The Minister of the Environment is risking more lives and more

people's health in this province than the Minister of the Environment, Mr Kells, was in April 1985 by his reaction to the PCB spill near Kenora.

Mr Dietsch: That's not true, and you know it. You're grasping for straws.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Sterling: The reaction of the Liberal Party during that particular debate—

Hon Mr Wrye: You just want to grandstand, Norm.

Mr Dietsch: Step up on that soapbox so everybody can see you.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Sterling: The reaction of outrage by the Liberal candidates during that particular election—

Mr Villeneuve: And the leader of the Liberal party.

Mr Sterling: And the leader, the now Premier. The outrage with regard to this spill of PCBs and their saying that there should be an immediate reaction to that kind of happening in Ontario, is contrasted to what we have seen happen in this Legislature today and over the past three days, when the Minister of the Environment will not answer questions as to specifics as to when in fact he found out about this particular problem.

Hon Mr Wrye: He gave answers. You just didn't like the answers.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Sterling: He does not want to answer, we can only surmise, for two possible reasons. Number one is that maybe he did not know about this problem and it was only the officials of his staff who did know. On the other hand, if he did know, why is he refusing to tell the public when he did in fact know about this particular problem?

In the past few days we have heard a lot of rhetoric, both on the government side here and also in the federal Parliament. In the federal Parliament, it is interesting to note that once a member here, now a member there, Sheila Copps, was chastising the federal minister, Mr Bouchard, for not taking action on this matter when it is very clear now that Mr Bouchard only found out about this very recently. His ministry knew about it, but in fact he did not know about it. The minister there did not know about it; this minister did and has not taken any action.

1720

Hon Mr Bradley: I have listened with a good deal of interest to the interventions of all members of the House this afternoon on a matter

of great importance, I think, to the people of Ontario, and certainly a matter which is most appropriate to the Legislative Assembly and for discussion in the Legislative Assembly. I was supportive of the opportunity to have this matter discussed in the House.

Many of the people who have spoken on all sides of the House are people for whom I have a good deal of respect, for the opinions that they would advance on this issue or other issues and for the points of view that they happen to bring to this issue.

Members would know that we have in Ontario, among a number of the branches of the Ministry of the Environment, the investigations and enforcement branch. It is one which is growing rather rapidly and has been a very active branch in dealing with a lot of allegations and problems that have arisen.

The Ministry of the Environment's investigations and enforcement branch has for some time, as we would expect, had concerns about all aspects of problems that might be before us, including that of waste, the transportation of waste, the disposal of waste and the misuse of waste in this province.

We are, I guess, one of the few jurisdictions where this kind of very extensive investigation, this kind of wide activity is going on in this field. It probably exists in a number of other areas where people have not devoted that much time, effort and energy to it.

Our investigations and enforcement branch decided to look at several aspects of the problem, particularly as it might relate to the transportation in and out of the province, what might originate in Ontario going to another jurisdiction or what might be coming into this province.

As a ministry, we wanted to determine the extent of the problem and who would be responsible for it, not simply those who are the immediate perpetrators of any particular crime but those who are ultimately responsible, those who are the kingpins—I guess that is the word commonly used—in this particular business. Our investigations and enforcement branch went out and looked at some of those problems.

I guess it was last summer that I indicated Ontario would be banning waste oil as a dust suppressant in the province. There were a lot of people who criticized that, who felt that it was an action which was taken too drastically and so on. But I can remember going up to Lake Clear at one time when there had been oil spread on a road as a dust suppressant, and I think it was identified as making its way into Lake Clear. We were

concerned about that. There was some direct evidence available that in fact this had happened, and we banned waste oil on the public roads of the province.

In addition to that, we had a general concern about how waste might move across a border. I think a number of jurisdictions had that concern. We established checkpoints at the border to determine the extent of the problem. But in addition to that, our ministry wanted to ensure that there were other kinds of investigations that took place, not simply at the borders but at other places in Ontario; so it set up surveillance in many locations.

You try as well as you can in the initial stages of an investigation, I suppose, not to let people know that it is happening. Eventually that information does come out, the fact that an investigation is on, and the knowledge of that really then becomes a source of deterrence for those who might be perpetrating any particular crime of this nature.

For that reason, we did, as I say getting the information together, decide one place where we could do some rather good checking through our investigations and enforcement branch was at border points. We established checkpoints—11 to 13 April along the Niagara River and 18 to 20 April along the St Lawrence River—where our people could actually do some testing to determine what the problems might be.

We looked at all aspects of waste problems. We looked particularly at what appeared on a manifest and tried to determine if what appears on the manifest is the same as what is actually in a tanker truck which would be carrying waste or another substance.

I remember in the Queenston Heights area, for instance, at the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge, I got an opportunity to be present at the conclusion of one of these checks—it was right near the end of that particular check at that time. There was a vehicle that was supposedly carrying steel. It was leaking some kind of liquid at that time as well. Of course, we would investigate matters of that kind. We were concerned about a number of these.

The Ontario Provincial Police was there for the purpose of dealing with violations related to the vehicle itself. For instance, the former Minister of the Environment would be aware that we want to ensure that the vehicles that are carrying any of these substances have the proper signage—that is under the Dangerous Goods Transportation Act—and also that the vehicles are in good condition. That was part of that as well.

In addition to that, we had representation from the federal Department of the Environment at both locations and were pleased to have that. We had co-operation from the customs and excise division of the Department of National Revenue, which was very kind, particularly along the Niagara River when it allowed us to use its property for the purposes. We had some facilities there—a computer, for instance, where you could type in the necessary information which would be on the computer sheet or the manifest to determine what the problem was.

We did these investigations, and those are ongoing. We stopped 383 trucks. I emphasize that it is only part of it, because we are looking at other parts of Ontario. We took 113 additional samples for detailed laboratory analysis, and the kind of immediate charges we were able to lay were 18. More significant charges are those that would arise from a subsequent investigation; we had about 23 follow-up investigations, I guess it was.

We believed that by gathering this information we could do two things. First of all, we could confirm any allegations or suggestions that were out there that in fact this was happening and determine to a certain extent how widespread it would be. That is one aspect of it. The second aspect, of course, is to build a case which we could take to court and prosecute.

I know my friend the member for Carleton (Mr Sterling) has been critical. That is his position and I accept that. He is an honest and sincere intervener in this House at all times, and I accept his position. He believes that we have perhaps placed too much emphasis on the prosecution end of things in Ontario.

That is a judgement we have had to make, both to use that as a deterrent and to determine the extent of the problem. We have indeed increased rather significantly the investigations and enforcement branch and the resources available to it. I believe sincerely that that is an advantage to Ontario, and I hope that the member would eventually agree that it is.

I indicated as well that, as a result of some of the problems that were arising, we should continue to investigate even into the future, and I indicated some of the ways in which we could change.

The member for Sarnia (Mr Brandt) has been very interested in this matter. For instance, on a number of occasions I indicated in the House to the member that the investigations had been going on for a number of months through the Ministry of the Environment.

Certainly we looked at several aspects. As I mentioned, we looked at crankcase oil and how that might be affected as a dust suppressant. Then we looked at general problems that existed, and how we were going to undertake those investigations.

In the early part of this year, in January, our ministry decided it would look as well at the possibility of mixing waste with fuel to determine whether that was a problem. There were accusations—

Mr Brandt: It has been 47 seconds and you won't tell us when.

Hon Mr Bradley: The member was not listening. I just gave the answer to that.

Mr Brandt: No, you did not give me the answer. When did you first know?

Hon Mr Bradley: I gave the answer a moment ago. The member should read Hansard.

What I said to the member, in fact, was that at the beginning of this year our ministry determined there could be a possibility of fuel mixing taking place. That is one of the many aspects of it.

I do not want to be the person responsible for jeopardizing a potential case before the courts and determine what could be confirmed or not confirmed. I must act on evidence that can be confirmed—I cannot act on speculation—and that is what our ministry has attempted to do.¹⁷³⁰

Mr Mackenzie: The Minister of the Environment today gave this House and the people of Ontario a performance that as far as I am concerned was a disgrace. A better word than disgrace might be a rather sick performance in this House today.

In answer to 13 questions, the minister refused to tell us when he first knew, and that is pretty fundamental and something that affects the health of the people of Ontario. I am told—I have not heard it—that he went out to the scrum and said January was when he first knew. I do not know whether that is the truth or not, but I still have not heard him say that in this House.

We also were exposed to a minister who tried to puff up his own perceived importance by, I think, foolishly trying to don Inspector Clouseau's hat and trying to turn a disaster in the province into a political Brownie point. In doing so, as far as I and most members of this House are concerned, he has dug an even bigger hole for himself and has made himself look both childish and foolish.

The bottom line is that contaminated oil containing PCBs, dioxins, furans, which are

dangerous and health-threatening—anybody who has worked in terms of health and safety in the workplace knows just how seriously they take PCBs and dioxins—have been added to supposedly clean fuel and trucked into Ontario and apparently, if the information is correct, sold to truckers, hospitals, heavy equipment dealers, greenhouses, gas stations and probably even individual houses through some of the smaller dealers.

A large number of people in Ontario have been exposed for months, as far as we know, to substances, possibly in strengths of as much as 25 times the permitted level in terms of PCBs. Some scientists, incidentally, say that we are incorrect in stating there is a permitted level of PCBs.

What is the defence we have heard in this House? The defence, not only from the minister himself but from a number of his colleagues who have talked, is that we need a further investigation, we need to nail down the criminal kingpins and nail them to the wall. I find this almost unbelievable in itself, but surely it begs the question of what is most important, the minister's ego or the safety and health of the citizens of Ontario. When we have a leak of PCBs in a plant, let me tell the members, they evacuate that before they know who is responsible or what caused the leak.

Is it not the real responsibility and job of a minister in Ontario to see that what comes first is the safety and health of its citizens? Like others, I was appalled at the actions and body language of the Premier and the Attorney General. They certainly belittled themselves here today with their smirks, laughs and rather weak catcalls in response to the continuous and legitimate question, when did the minister know?

It is said that the truth seems to be so difficult to get out of this government. Were the OPP involved or not? Why the different positions of the minister and the Solicitor General? Why the difference between the federal and provincial ministers? Why not, for once at least in this House, lead with the truth?

I think the people of Ontario are beginning to understand a fundamental flaw in this government. That flaw is arrogance and the huge majority they have had. It is an arrogance we saw in the remarks from the member for Kingston and The Islands, who simply said: "Hey, we're investigating it. Trust us on the deal." I have to tell them I do not have much trust for them.

Unless the Minister of the Environment can tell us in this House that it is not true, that the

toxic substances have not been mixed and not delivered to establishments in Ontario, unless he can tell us that is not true, then he has fundamentally failed in his job, because I submit that in his job it is much more important to protect the health and safety of the people of Ontario than it is to investigate further and find out just what kinds of concentrations there are in terms of these substances in Ontario.

If he cannot tell us that this has not happened, then he should have alerted the people immediately he knew the stuff was coming in. I suggest that would have been as much a deterrent as anything they have done, rather than let them continue for months with these substances. We do not know now what the effects will be or how many people may be affected by exposure to this.

Mr Ballinger: They may not be getting toxins.

Mr Mackenzie: They may not, but we do not know that. We should have moved a heck of a lot faster. If there are dioxins, furans and polychlorinated biphenyls involved, then it is certainly a very real and very serious threat. We did not respond in a way that would take care of the interests of the people before the minister's desire to try to look good and see what he could find out in an investigation. As I say, he put on his Inspector Clouseau hat.

I think what has happened here in this House today is a disgrace. This government is going to have to answer for it for a long time.

Mr Villeneuve: I too participate in this emergency debate with some degree of apprehension. It is rather difficult to accept that the ministry and the minister are credible when we had the kind of performance we had this afternoon during the beginning of question period.

In the speech from the throne, it was mentioned that the government plans to reduce emissions from automobiles. I am wondering now, does this simply mean that they want to reduce PCBs and other illegal toxic additives or are they going beyond that?

It is a very good question whenever the member for Kingston and The Islands says they do not really know whether PCBs, solvents, dioxins and furans are toxic. Why are we spending \$70 million? Why has \$70 million already been spent by the Ontario Waste Management Corp. on a facility to be built to destroy PCBs in Ontario? Would we have invested seven years of study and \$70 million plus if these toxic chemicals were not very dangerous to our very existence?

Members of this government today are telling us that they want to make sure that indeed these illegal additives are harmful to our environment. It is hard to believe. The credibility of this ministry and this government—

Mr Callahan: Read the spills bill.

Mr Brandt: Bob, what's that got to do with this?

Mr Callahan: A lot.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. The member for Brampton South (Mr Callahan) will have an opportunity to speak in about eight minutes when the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry has concluded.

Mr Villeneuve: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I know some of the statements that are being made today are just a little bit beyond what these members would like to hear because all of sudden their credibility has gone down several notches. I will prove before I have finished my 10-minute presentation why some of these people are just a little bit nervous about this emergency debate.

What, for instance, Mr Speaker, do you think Domtar, when it is being charged for polluting the environment—I agree it should be charged—is going to tell representatives of the ministry who are doing the charging? “You people allowed PCBs, solvents and toxic materials to be burned in vehicles in the province of Ontario.” Is that not really what you and I would say? Who is calling the kettle black here?

Kraft, for instance, is processing nature's most perfect food. Ault Foods, similarly. Both have been charged under the Environmental Protection Act. Yet the boilers where they are burning fuel are probably polluting the environment at this particular time as much as the effluent. We do not know this. This is the type of credibility, or lack thereof, that we are going to have presented to ministry officials all the time.

Interjections.

Mr Villeneuve: The rump just cannot stand this and I can appreciate that. They are having a great deal of difficulty.

Charlottenburgh, a municipality in eastern Ontario represented by my colleague the member for Cornwall (Mr Cleary), was charged under the Environmental Protection Act. What are Charlottenburgh residents and the municipality going to say whenever they find out this minister has allowed this to go on and he will not tell us for how long?

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I thought the bomb analogy used by a couple of members here was interesting. It is like the police telling you, "There is a bank robbery in progress but we want to catch the culprits, so we will wait till they come out." In the meantime, everybody is shot; and yes, you get them when they come out, but it does not really make any difference.

The minister in his presentation just a few moments ago said he was going to ban waste oil. It is great rhetoric to ban waste oil, but it winds up in your gas tank and you are burning it and it is polluting the atmosphere. That is what happens. The cynicism and the lipservice that is being paid by this government at this particular time is very difficult to accept and to believe.

I happen to have in my pocket a fund-raising letter from the Ontario Liberal Party. It is signed by someone who is intimately close to the Solicitor General, a fellow by the name of Don Smith. I am sure members will be interested. It reads in part, as follows:

"The Ontario Liberal Party knows that the deterioration of our environment is not invisible. It can be seen and felt daily, because when we talk about the environment we are not just talking about clean air, lakes and rivers; it is much more than that. Environmental protection goes to the very root of the way we live. It concerns our lifestyle and personal health and our continued economic prosperity."

This comes from people who are paying lipservice to the environment. I will quote a little more, because it is most interesting whenever this government, this party, uses the environment to try and hoodwink the Ontario public into providing funds for this party. I emphasize the word "hoodwink."

"Under the guidance of the Ontario Liberal government, our province has begun to come to grips with the critically important environmental issues facing our society." Is that the kind of facing the problems that the minister is doing? "We intend to continue to spend the time, effort and money necessary to clean up our air, water and soil." Does that mean burning illegal toxic materials in our gas tanks, with the minister knowing and not stopping it? Why have we spent \$70 million to get rid of PCBs?

"Meeting the environmental challenge will take time and strength of purpose." Well, well, well; how much time? The minister will not tell us how long he has known we have a very toxic situation here. "We need a committed government"—we surely do; we do not have one right now—"one with a proven record." I must say that up until this particular incident, it had a

reasonable record, but its notches have gone down very considerably since this news recently broke.

"Will you offer the same commitment"—they are asking their Liberal friends—"by sending a cheque?" To all the Liberals out in Ontario, I say: "When you consider sending a cheque, remember the emergency debate that occurred in the Legislature today and remember some of the things you thought this government was doing. You are now realizing it has led you down the garden path and it is a garden that is now polluted with PCBs, etc."

In summation, the speech from the throne said this government wanted to reduce emissions from car exhausts. Ethanol-methanol gas will do that; not adding PCBs, solvents and whatever other toxic, illegal material. Existing gas pollutes more than EM gas. Unleaded gas currently used in Canada uses a compound called MMT to boost octane, but MMT is banned in the United States because it increases the emissions of hydrocarbons, some of which are carcinogenic. Because alcohol has proven to have oxygen in its chemical makeup, it reduces carbon monoxide emissions by up to 30 per cent. This is an important factor in urban areas.

With respect to the ozone formation, EM gas is considered neutral compared to normal gas. Our octane additives in Ontario are illegal in the United States. Quite obviously, PCBs and other toxic materials are illegal all over. This government is allowing them to be used in this province.

Mr J. B. Nixon: The motion before this Legislature, which caused the emergency debate, indeed touches upon very serious matters. The concern I have about this motion being before the Legislature is the nature of the allegations made and the justification for those allegations, as put to us by the opposition parties. In particular, I would like to note that the movers of both emergency debates are not here to debate this emergency.

Interjections.

Mr J. B. Nixon: The opposition parties thought this was an emergency. They brought the motions. The movers are not here.

Mrs Marland: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I understand the rules of this House require that only facts be stated, and the fact was just stated that I was not in the House as a mover of the second motion requiring this emergency debate into tainted fuel oil. Will the record show that I am indeed in the House?

Mrs Grier: The motion of the New Democratic Party stood in my name and was moved in my

momentary absence after question period by the leader of my party, but the motion was filed in my name and I am here.

Mr J. B. Nixon: Let us be patently clear: The leaders of the parties who brought these motions are not present. They are not here. They thought it was an emergency. They wanted to take up the valuable House time to debate it and they are not present. The member for Mississauga South is leaving the Legislature. I tell members, these people have little, if no interest, in the matter they purported to want to debate.

I was very confused about this debate when I read the notice of motion. Let me tell members why I was confused: The debate that was purported to be taking place, according to the opposition parties, was and is a debate about the truth. I said to myself: "Let's go back to first principles. Let's find out what the job of the Minister of the Environment is."

The Minister of the Environment has a public trust, not only as an elected member of this Legislature, but as a minister of the crown. The Environmental Protection Act, which he is obliged to act in accordance with, which he is obliged to administer, which no member of the opposition is obliged to administer, no member of the opposition is obliged to read or even care about, states, under section 3, that the first duty, in numerical order, of the Minister of the Environment is to "investigate problems of pollution, waste management, waste disposal, litter management and litter disposal." That is what he is doing. That is what he has been doing. He has been doing his job.

In 1980, the former Progressive Conservative government passed a piece of legislation called the Environmental Protection Act, which said that the fines and penalties for breaching the act would be a maximum of \$5,000 on the first offence and \$10,000 on the second offence. If an offence has taken place in this case, if there is a successful prosecution, had we had the old legislation that the Progressive Conservatives had, the maximum fine would have been \$5,000 on the first offence and \$10,000 on the second offence: nothing more than a licence to pollute and a licence to violate the Environmental Protection Act.

Now, after 1986 and amendments under this Liberal government to the Environmental Protection Act, the maximum fine on the first offence is \$250,000, the maximum fine on the second offence is \$500,000 and there is a jail sentence to which every polluter is exposed.

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Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Mr J. B. Nixon: That is the first time in the history of Ontario that a polluter could be exposed to a jail sentence and a fine of \$500,000 for each and every offence.

The parties in the opposition have engaged for at least three hours in the dubious political virtues of gossip, innuendo and rhetoric. Nothing more than that: innuendo, gossip and rhetoric. They have put no evidence before this House of an illegal transaction. They have put no evidence before this House of a polluting act having taken place. They have read newspaper headlines dealing with such comments as, "Bootleggers Making Millions."

The sources of their allegations, the sources of their evidence, are newspaper articles which read, among other things, "One Toronto bootlegger, who was horrified to learn that he had been selling contaminated fuel, described how his business worked." What better sources to base an emergency debate upon I cannot imagine. If they are dealing in bootleggers' evidence and bootleggers' allegations published in the *Globe and Mail*, I have to say to them they have not got a case.

What they do not understand and what they do not want to deal with is that if we have a serious problem—and no one is suggesting here that we may not have a serious problem—we have to deal with it with hard police work: facts, evidence, investigation, which they do not want to do because it is not sexy, it is not glamorous and it is not going to get them a headline.

The Minister of the Environment knows what his responsibility is. He has taken his responsibility seriously. He has exercised political judgement, his political judgement being quite clear that we have to get to the bottom of this, the investigation has to continue, the facts have to be determined, and they want to ignore that. The fact is that all investigations take hard police work, which they do not see and they do not talk about in their day-to-day dealings with the press or with media or in this Legislature. We cannot ignore that.

If the members opposite want him to discontinue the police investigation or if they want him to abandon an investigation, they should stand up and say so. But in the course of making an investigation, a minister has very serious responsibilities indeed, responsibilities which they would rather obscure or, I am sorry, ignore.

I find it embarrassing, as a member of this Legislature, that elected members would advocate investigation curtailment or disruption of a very serious police investigation, something that they fail to understand, and I ask the members to consider that—

Interjections.

Mr J. B. Nixon: I am sorry. If the members opposite do not understand what a police investigation is, I cannot help them. I really cannot help them.

Another problem I would point out to them is that they have heard from the Minister of the Environment. He has stood up and told them the extent and nature of the investigations that have taken place. He has told them about the expansion of the enforcement division of the Ministry of the Environment. They have chosen to ignore that.

They have heard that there were over 300 investigations taking place in the last month. They ignore that. They ignore the fact that he is doing his job in the most superior way, and yet the members from the third party want to quote our Ottawa brethren. I suggest to them that they listen to the words of their Ottawa brother Mr Bouchard, who says: "I don't know everything that is going on in my department. I try to know the most I can."

Mr Villeneuve: There is an honest minister.

Mr J. B. Nixon: An honest minister who is not doing his job. That is the fundamental difference here. We have a minister who is doing his job, a minister who has made a tough political decision to continue that investigation, as if there was any doubt.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. The time remaining will permit another speaker. The member for Sault Ste Marie.

Mr Morin-Strom: What we are facing here today in this emergency debate is a situation which represents the most serious dereliction of duty that I have seen as a member of this Legislature.

The Minister of the Environment has not fulfilled his obligation, his position, to the people of the province of Ontario with respect to this matter. He has sat on information. He has not passed on that information. He has refused to tell what has happened to the Legislature today and, most seriously, he has refused to tell the general public of Ontario of a very serious health risk which has been facing this province for months, if not years.

The minister took a stand that he was going to be the white knight to save the province of Ontario and, as he says, get the kingpins in this operation. In order to do that, he has quite clearly suppressed information. He has not passed it on to others within his own cabinet, he has not passed it on to federal authorities and, most seriously, he has not passed it on to the general public, whose health is at risk in this particular matter.

This minister has taken actions which are really a total insult to every member of this Legislature. Today, he was asked 13 times in a row when he knew about the tainted fuels coming into the province of Ontario. He stonewalled this Legislature. He would not tell us the facts. He refused to pass on the information that he knows with respect to this very serious matter.

Beyond the timing, there is the issue of "What did he know and what did he do about it?" The fact is that nothing has been done about it. Those shipments continue to come into this province. The public has not been informed of the dangers. Why did this minister not take actions in the interest of the government of Ontario and the public?

Yesterday, we heard the Premier being asked about this matter and the Premier saying that he did not know or was not aware. The Minister of the Environment did not pass on this very serious information with respect to an investigation that he was conducting internally in his own ministry to his own Premier and his own cabinet.

If he were serious about getting the kingpins and not the small fry, as he has been quoted as saying all over the media today, surely he would not be relying on his own ministry inspectors to get what he has claimed is organized crime involvement in this action. He would have got federal authorities and the OPP involved.

We know from the answers we got yesterday from the Solicitor General that in fact she knew nothing about it. She said that her officials and the OPP were investigating solely the tax scam which obviously is associated in this matter.

Why would this minister have withheld information of such critical importance to the province of Ontario and, as he has said, involved organized crime in his effort to get the kingpins and not involved our own provincial police, the RCMP and the federal minister?

Most seriously, why has this minister neglected his duty to the people of the province, his responsibility to look out for the safety and health of our environment and general public? The minister has neglected his duty. He has refused

public disclosure on this matter. He has played games with the Legislature. He has been fighting windmills in other areas, in other jurisdictions, and he has been asleep at the switch when it comes to protecting the public in Ontario.

For months he has been sitting on this, refusing to act in the interests of the people of this province. "It's going to be a long, hot summer," said the minister, and his long, hot summer is right now. This minister has to go; this is the end of it for this minister.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. It now being six o'clock, this debate is adjourned and concluded.

Hon Mr Conway: Mr Speaker, if I might, I would like to seek unanimous consent to revert to

motions to deal with tomorrow's order of business.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have unanimous consent?

Agreed to.

Hon Mr Conway: I want to thank my colleagues for that.

MOTION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon Mr Conway moved that notwithstanding the order of the House of 26 April 1989, private members' public business shall be considered tomorrow, Thursday, 11 May 1989, at 10 am.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 1801.

ERRATA

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
8	323	1	55	Desjardins appeared in Windsor before the will
8	323	2	18	protect Mrs Desjardins and others who suffer
8	323	2	51	besides Mrs Desjardins' during the course of this sitting.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

- Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)
 Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)
 Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)
 Beer, Charles (York North L)
 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)
 Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)
Bradley, Hon James J., Minister of the Environment (St Catharines L)
 Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breaugh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)
 Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)
 Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)
Caplan, Hon Elinor, Minister of Health (Orléans L)
 Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)
 Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
 Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)
 Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)
 Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)
Conway, Hon Sean G., Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)
 Cousins, W. Donald (Markham PC)
 Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)
 Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)
Curling, Hon Alvin, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)
 Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)
 Dietsch, Michael M. (St Catharines-Brock L)
Eakins, Hon John F., Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)
Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A., Speaker (Perth L)
 Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)
Elston, Hon Murray J., Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L)
 Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)
 Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)
 Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)
 Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)
 Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)
 Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)
 Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)
Fontaine, Hon René, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)
Fulton, Hon Ed, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)
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 Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)
 Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)
 Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)
 Hart, Christine E. (York East L)
 Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)
Hošek, Hon Chaviva, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)
 Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Kanter, Ron (St Andrew-St Patrick L)
Kerrio, Hon Vincent G., Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)
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Oddie Munro, Hon Lily, Minister of Culture and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)
O'Neil, Hon Hugh P., Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Quinte L)
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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Second Session, 34th Parliament

Thursday, 11 May 1989

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, 11 May 1989

The House met at 1000.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

Mr Owen moved resolution 6:

That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing the unique nature of owned-home leased-lot retirement communities, the government of Ontario should undertake a review of these communities that would include: the apportionment of common amenities and services; tenure arrangements including leaseholds, life leases and condominiums; verification of maintenance and operating expenditures; contractual restrictions on the right of resale of units; the absence of fiduciary regulation; the registrability of leases and the role of rent regulation for these communities.

The Deputy Speaker: The member has up to 20 minutes to make his presentation and may reserve any portion of it for the windup.

Mr Owen: In addressing this resolution, I would like to point out that in my riding of Simcoe Centre is located the oldest and largest retirement community in Ontario, Sandy Cove Acres. I would like to say at the outset that I have found through the years that the people living in Sandy Cove are a very happy group. They enjoy the camaraderie of living and sharing activities in that community.

However, notwithstanding that, there are problems that have arisen and become apparent through the years in that type of structure.

I would also like to point out that in this province we are relatively new to retirement communities. There are other parts of the world, such as Florida, New England and parts of Europe, that have been involved in retirement communities for many years before we have been. I think we can benefit from their experiences, their problems and what they have done to address some of those problems.

Retirement communities are generally defined as groups of housing units planned for independent older people, most of whom are retired. They normally include common amenities and

services, particularly those of a recreational and social nature. Tenure arrangements include leaseholds, life leases and condominiums. Most retirement communities in Ontario are operated as leasehold arrangements where residents own their unit and lease the land for a long-term period of 20 years or less. It is with this type of tenure arrangement that most of the concerns have been identified by myself and by this resolution.

One of the most often expressed concerns in connection with the owned-home leased-lot type of retirement community is the inability of residents to verify the maintenance and operating expenses of the community. Often the lease will provide that the landlord-developer shall have the right to estimate the maintenance and operating cost for the coming year and to charge the tenant-owner one twelfth of the estimate in advance on a monthly basis. The landlord undertakes to adjust for any deficiency or excess.

However, there is no requirement that the landlord-developer provide financial statements or documents verifying expenses. Indeed, if any statement is produced, there is no requirement that it be audited to ensure its veracity or conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. Several associations have expressed the concern that costs other than operating or maintenance expenses, such as sales, marketing or construction costs, may be included in the maintenance and operating expenses charged to the tenant.

I should identify here that most of the retirement communities in this province have associations made up of people who live in those homes and that they have now for the past two years had an association across the province where they equally and mutually share their concerns.

At present, there is no way of verifying this claim they are making. Some residents have complained to me of being charged for directors' fees of over \$100,000 per year, or \$148,000 of loan interest without explanation, or gas expenses that would have required the developer's trucks to operate 24 hours nonstop according to some of these association people.

Under the Residential Rent Regulation Act, operating expenses can be examined by the Rent Review Hearings Board only where the landlord applies for a rate variance greater than the guideline set for the year. There is at present no mechanism available to residents to ensure they are paying only what they contracted to pay. This problem is particularly onerous for the owners of those units that are exempt from the RRRRA, that is leases entered into prior to 1 May 1985 for units that had been exempt from rent control under the previous legislation where the tenant is the original tenant. The terms of the lease respecting rent increases will there govern the parties.

In these cases, maintenance and operating costs are not subject to scrutiny by the Rent Review Hearings Board, nor are increases limited to the yearly guideline. Residents are therefore without the ability to verify the amount and nature of the expenses, and at present a number of nonrent-regulated residents face increases of 40 per cent in maintenance charges, according to some of these people.

I would suggest as possible action that at the conclusion of each fiscal year, each retirement community landlord-developer should provide audited statements of maintenance and operating expenses to all the residents in that community and adjustments then could be made in accordance with these statements.

1010

A number of leases in these retirement communities provide that the right to resell the resident's unit is subject to the landlord-developer's right of first refusal. Several of the people who have been in touch with me from these communities have expressed concern that these clauses are prevalent in retirement community leases and that they severely limit the right of resale.

The effect of such a clause, it has been suggested, is to restrict a resident's ability to leave the retirement community by limiting the ability to attract purchasers and by imposing on the resident an additional cost, of at least five per cent of the purchase price, because of the discount he must give to the landlord. In some instances, the resident actually pays an additional 10 to 12 per cent of the purchase price, five per cent to the landlord-developer in the form of a discount and five to six per cent to an agent as a real estate commission for finding a purchaser who is ready, willing and able to purchase the unit.

Additionally, it has been suggested that the right of resale is open to the abuse that once a landlord-developer has purchased the property for 95 per cent of the price, it may be resold by the developer to the original purchaser for 100 per cent of the purchase price. I have seen this happening in the Sandy Cove situation where the estate of someone who had been a resident was trying to sell. It had obtained a purchaser, the owner had refused to allow the sale to the purchaser, had turned around and then on its own terms to its own benefit had sold to the very same purchaser originally contracted by the estate.

It has also been suggested that in these circumstances the landlord-developer is in effect trading in real estate without a licence to do so, contrary to the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act. The Landlord and Tenant Act prohibits a landlord from acting as an agent for a tenant-vendor "except pursuant to a written agency contract," which is subsection 125(6) of the act.

What can we do about it?

First, I would suggest that we prohibit the right of first refusal in favour of a landlord-developer or at least prohibit this being done at discounted prices, as is now available to them.

Second, we should permit the advertisement for sale of the units by posting signs on the units. Most of the retirement communities will not allow this to take place at the present time.

Third, I would suggest that if the lease is left as is, then provide that the landlord-developer must disgorge any profit made on resale to the original purchaser within a reasonable time. A registration system would ensure compliance with this requirement.

Let me go on to another concern represented in this resolution. At present, there is no consumer protection regulation of the relationship between a landlord and tenant where the tenant prepaies rent at the beginning of a long-term lease. There is no obligation on the landlord to keep any portion of the funds invested for repayment in the event of termination of the lease or refund to the estate in the event of death before expiration of the term.

Similarly, there is at present no protection in the event a landlord becomes bankrupt or is unable to continue the operation of the community and has spent the funds. A civil action for damages is not a satisfactory remedy in this case because of the likely insolvency of the landlord—which has happened many times, I understand, in the state of Florida—and the time factor involved in such litigation. What should be done? Although an implied trust may be imposed

by law, it has been suggested that an explicit statutory fiduciary obligation be imposed in these circumstances. The trust funds would have to be kept separately, and failing that they could be traced by the tenant.

It has also been suggested that a reporting mechanism be implemented requiring the landlord to produce yearly audited financial statements. At a minimum this would provide disclosure of the handling of the funds. A less onerous mechanism for regulating the relationship and of ensuring the performance of the landlord's obligations is to require the posting of a performance bond. In the event the landlord failed to maintain the operation, funds would be available to compensate the tenants.

A further problem we have addressed in this resolution is the nonregistrability of leases. Many of the leases in these retirement communities are not registrable under the present legislation, the Land Titles Act or the Registry Act. To be registrable under either an instrument must refer to a legal entity and often in these communities there is no such legal entity because there is no proper lot division such as with a plan of subdivision or a reference plan.

There is no legal description of the land. There may be a developer's sketch of the lots, but this is not acceptable for registration. As a result, the leases are not registrable as between the tenant and the landlord. They are, nevertheless, enforceable contract agreements. I would suggest here that we require the filing of a reference plan for all such leased-lot communities. This will ensure that each lot has a legal description and is capable of registration.

A further problem is that it has been suggested the act falls short of protecting these retirement communities because of their unique nature. First, they are designed as close-knit communities of independent seniors having similar interests who wish to participate in the social and recreational life facilities. The RRRA, however, creates tensions and divisions among residents because of the statutory exemption for some units from the protection of the act.

First, any lease entered into prior to 2 May 1985 for a unit that was previously exempt from rent regulation where the original lessee remains as tenant is exempt under the act.

Second, as a result of the previous rent review legislation, there is a great disparity among rents. Under the earlier legislation, pre-1976 units were regulated but post-1976 units were not.

Third, the definition of rent under the act excludes any property tax referable to the

building. Therefore, the building portion of the property tax is not subject to rent regulation.

Fourth, there is the potential for a pass-through by the landlord-developer to existing tenants of capital expenditures for future phases of the community.

The Rent Review Hearings Board will of course attempt to establish the line between the existing and future tenants in these circumstances. It could, however, be difficult to accomplish where, for example, a landlord installs a larger piece of machinery than is warranted by the existing number of tenants.

Possible action? It has been suggested that the RRRA be made more responsive to the specific needs of a retirement community, first by extending the application of the act to all leases; and second, the act could be amended to require production of source documents and audited statements for all operating and maintenance expenses and for capital expenditures, to eliminate the potential for incorrect pass-through expenses or expenditures. The building portion of the property tax could be subject to strict accounting to ensure no overpayment has been made, and excess amounts levied could be subject to interest payments to discourage overestimation of the tax.

In many ways, municipalities are pleased to have retirement communities because they do not require services such as schools and school and other transportation, recreational facilities, snow removal or parks. There is concern, however, about ensuring the integrity and ongoing operation of the community as a retirement community in the future. Municipalities are concerned they may be called upon to save these communities if the developer, through insolvency or bad marketing, is unable to operate a community as a retirement community. This problem has developed in other jurisdictions. I hope it does not happen here in Ontario, but we should be prepared to see it does not.

Most of the hard services in these communities, such as roads, sewers and water systems, are private and have not been constructed to meet stricter municipal standards. The developer's abandonment, for whatever reason, could result in a large, unplanned-for financial burden on the municipality to upgrade these services. What I am suggesting should take place here is that the report coming out of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs be used to respond to these concerns more comprehensively than has been done thus far.

I note that there are still five minutes, Mr Speaker, and I would ask if I could reserve that time to address any concerns raised.

1020

Ms Bryden: As the New Democratic critic for senior citizens' affairs, I am pleased to speak in support of the resolution of the member for Simcoe Centre. The resolution is calling on the government to review the housing arrangements in retirement communities throughout the province.

I gather he is referring to communities where the land is privately owned and lots are leased to home owners. In addition to land rent, they pay fees for common amenities and services. Since he calls them somewhat unique, I think he should have provided us with a more precise definition to make it clear what current housing and financial services legislation now applies to them and what the gaps are.

I am somewhat surprised that a Liberal backbencher has to use a private member's resolution to bring the need for this kind of legislation to the government. I would have thought a government which has been in power for almost four years would have already reviewed the current legislation applying to retirement communities and would have found there is a serious need for regulation of the diverse home owner arrangements and payment for services in such communities.

I am sure the government is aware of some of the problems being encountered by seniors in these communities. I am particularly surprised that a government which made its concern for seniors a key part of its 1985 election promises has now ignored this field where legislation is apparently very much needed.

In fact, I remind the members that the accord signed in May 1985 between the Premier (Mr Peterson) and the member for York South (Mr B. Rae) shortly after that election contained this clause about seniors. The program for action from common campaign proposals to be implemented in the first two years included this clause: "Reform of services for the elderly to provide alternatives to institutional care."

This is the problem, that nothing has been done in this particular field to help seniors operate independently in their own homes, to be able to stay out of institutions and not have to pay unreasonable amounts for the kind of housing arrangements they have undertaken in these retirement communities.

I remind the members that it was the accord that I just quoted, between Premier Peterson and the member for York South which made it possible for the New Democrats to vote with the Liberals to defeat the Progressive Conservative

government, which had held office for 43 years. This happened in 1985.

The new Liberal government even went so far as to set up an office for senior citizens' affairs. Unfortunately, it was only a token gesture, since the minister appointed to take charge of it was a minister without portfolio. I often wonder if the resignation from the Legislature of the first holder of that office, Ron Van Horne, the former member for London North who resigned in 1987, was not partly due to his frustration at the impotence of that office. Certainly his successor, the member for Dufferin-Peel (Mrs Wilson), has illustrated her inability to get many needed changes in legislation for seniors, because she always has to say "I will draw it to the attention of the minister responsible for that area."

An example is the need for the Attorney General (Mr Scott) to remove the "no pets" clause from tenants' leases. It is being used by unscrupulous landlords to gain possession of apartments from tenants when they do not like those particular tenants or feel they could rent their apartments at a higher rate if they were evicted.

With no ministry to administer regulatory legislation affecting seniors, the current minister responsible for senior citizens' affairs is certainly not able to carry out the Liberal promises to help seniors stay in their own homes or to protect seniors who are living in their own homes in retirement communities in the province.

I suspect that this area of regulation for seniors has been so long neglected because the government is not prepared to take on the task of regulating the terms of these seniors' leases and tenure with the land owners and developers. The only ministers who could bring in legislation and regulations to protect the many seniors who are living in a state of uncertainty about their leaseholds and tenure include the ministers of Housing, Consumer and Commercial Relations, Municipal Affairs, Financial Institutions and the Attorney General. There may be others as well. Certainly we need the Minister of Housing (Ms Hošek) to bring the rent review procedures and appeals into these retirement communities.

I am somewhat surprised that a Liberal backbencher is moving away from the Liberal fetish against regulation and its worship of the free market by introducing this motion. New Democrats have been accused of wanting too much government intervention. We have opposed most of the deregulation moves of the Liberal government here and the Conservative government at Ottawa. We are now seeing the

results of deregulation in the chaos in our airline world, the trucking industry and other fields that have been deregulated.

By asking for the kind of legislation that the member for Simcoe Centre (Mr Owen) thinks seniors need, he is asking the government to go back to the kind of regulation New Democrats have long supported. What we need are regulations to protect people from exploitation by unscrupulous operators in the so-called free market. Does the member for Simcoe Centre realize that he has a tough battle on his hands to convince his own freewheeling caucus to look at more regulation? That is exactly what all the members of this House will be voting for today if they support this motion.

I support it because I believe it is time we recognize that regulation is still necessary when the free market is full of freebooters. If this motion passes, I hope the government will get on with bringing in legislation and regulations as soon as possible to protect the hundreds of seniors who may be subject to exploitation by unscrupulous landlords and developers in retirement communities. The situation is a matter of extreme urgency to the people concerned and I hope the government will bring in legislation before the end of this session, preferably before the end of June.

Mr J. M. Johnson: I would like to just point out that I do not intend to speak on this resolution, but the member for Durham East (Mr Cureatz) and the member for Leeds-Grenville (Mr Runciman) both do intend to speak on it. If we pass now, hopefully we will have 10 minutes before the hour is finished.

1030

The Deputy Speaker: Fair enough.

Mr Callahan: I rise to speak in support of this motion, but before I do, it is a very technical question and it is one that perhaps lawyers can understand and deal with.

It is unfortunate that the member for Beaches-Woodbine (Ms Bryden) had to inject into this entire discussion a question of partisanship. Normally, my experience in private members' hour has been that there are motions put forward by private members. It is not a matter for partisan argument or criticism, and yet the totality of her speech appeared to be in that vein. That is regrettable.

I might add, as well, that she says nothing has been done by the government. This is the last thing I will say in terms of a partisan statement. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs, in fact, has just recently completed a two-year study of the

impact of these types of communities on municipal planning. It's final—

Ms Bryden: Has it been tabled?

Mr Callahan: Just a second. The member should just relax and lighten up.

Its final report will be released in the spring or early summer of 1989; it may be a little behind, but it is coming. It is expected that the report will establish planning guidelines for the evaluation and development of retirement communities. I suggest that the member is misinformed or she lacks the information in saying that we have done nothing. We have, in fact, and the motion of the member for Simcoe Centre today is most appropriate in that regard.

Let's get down to try to explain in simple language the problem that exists here. The problem that exists here is that a developer who has perhaps a 100- or 200-acre parcel of land and either does not wish to go through the normal channels of getting a severance to sell off a specific lot to a person or does not wish to go through the difficulties of filing a plan of subdivision and all of the additional financial payments that requires in terms of sewers, roads, etc, takes that 100- or 200-acre parcel of land and he tries to develop what in essence is, I guess, almost a group home in a sense, because everybody lives on the same piece of land. They have their own individual units and there is no definition for them in terms of what they really own. They have access and rights to use the total facilities for recreational purposes and so on.

This works very well, except that it does require regulation. The regulation is required to protect seniors from, as the member indicated, unscrupulous people who might try to use this sort of unregulated process to perhaps not deal with seniors fairly.

I suggest that no one is perhaps pointing a finger at anybody whom I know of, but the possibility is there. I think that is the major function of government. It is not to interfere with the free enterprise system; it is to in fact establish an atmosphere within which people of all ages are going to be protected and can be certain that what they are paying or not paying or what they are being allowed to do or not do is in fact something that is lawful.

The member for Simcoe Centre has brought forward a number of concerns. The question of a right of first refusal is not necessarily an unusual one. That is sometimes quite an acceptable one. But when the mutuality between the two parties allows the developer to require a five per cent reduction if he buys it, that perhaps is going a

little way towards not giving the seniors the full opportunity to reap their investment should they decide to leave the seniors community.

In addition to that there is the question of the moneys they pay in advance, whatever types of moneys they may be. If they are not held in a trust account and the developer or the owner of this property goes bankrupt, these people are in fact left to the mercy of the creditors. There are a whole host of statutes of this province, the Mechanics' Lien Act and so on. Where moneys are in fact being advanced, they should be held in trust. I suspect that the results of the reviews by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs into this will come up with some form for holding moneys in trust.

The additional factors, such as the question of being able to dispose of their property, become very significant features in the case of seniors or retired people, because upon their death there can be a very difficult problem in terms of the estate trying to deal with that particular property.

I think seniors move into these communities for a number of reasons. They move in because it gives them the possibility of being outside urban areas, because this is where most of these units are established. It gives them the possibility, as well, of having the flexibility of being able to move between here and some other location, either in Ontario or outside Canada, without having to worry about whether the lawn is cut or the snow is shovelled.

I think that is to be admired. I think that is something we should encourage for our seniors because they are at a stage where they are freed of the obligations that they may have had with children growing up in their earlier years, and they now have the opportunity to travel and to take advantage of some of the sights, sounds and tastes of the world. I think it has to be encouraged.

At the same time, I think we have to be certain that the people who are perhaps most vulnerable in our community are protected adequately. The member for Simcoe Centre also refers to the question of maintenance costs. Without some regulation to stipulate what can go in those maintenance costs, it really becomes what you might call a landlord lease. He or she or it can put anything in it that he or she or it wants. The seniors are trusting. I am not for one minute suggesting many of them do not have good business acumen, but they are trusting and they are people who believe what is presented to them. They do not question it.

Accordingly, I would submit that it is very necessary that we provide for a proper accounting by the owner of this development to the seniors, because without that proper accounting you can wind up in situations where people are perhaps strapped for funds. That may be the case for some retired people. Others may have more money now than they did before because of the freeing of the responsibilities that they had before, but in the main I would think that they are watching their pennies. They may not be watching them because they are short on money. I think retired people, as well as parents and seniors—I think I will feel the same way and perhaps everyone in this House will, as we approach our golden years—attempt to preserve what is left to pass on to their children.

My experience with seniors has been that they work very hard to do that. I have always encouraged them to go out and spend it all. The children do not really deserve it. They worked for it; they should have the fun of spending it. But that does not seem to be the attitude of seniors. They want to look after leaving an estate for their children. Accordingly, they are very frugal. In their frugality, if they are being taken advantage of, and I am not suggesting that I can name any particular situation where that is happening, but if the possibility exists that they could be taken advantage of, that is a very significant item in the law that we should correct.

I support my colleague the member for Simcoe Centre. I think it is of some significance that he brought this forward. It is unfortunate that it is a highly technical issue and it is one that there are a number of ways of solving. For every solution that you suggest, if you rush into it rather than do a study such as the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr Eakins) has done, there may be an equal problem that will arise as a result of that solution.

So I think it is something we have to deal with very carefully and very sensitively to ensure that the members of our community who have contributed so greatly to Ontario are protected as adequately as any other member of society, and perhaps it is even more significant for the reasons I have stated. I am very pleased to speak in support of this motion. I would hope that all other members of the House would see fit to support the motion by the member for Simcoe Centre.

Ms Bryden: Unfortunately, our second speaker has not yet arrived. He is tied up in traffic somewhere. I guess the Progressive Conservative Party is not ready to proceed either. If other speakers can proceed, we would still like the allotment of the second 10 minutes.

1040

The Deputy Speaker: I still have to proceed with the usual rotation, and there being no member from the two official opposition parties, we shall proceed with a Liberal then.

Mr Callahan: I am sure there will be unanimous consent to do that, although I should raise the point, and perhaps this is nasty, that on one occasion when I was late, the honourable member who is asking for that request tried to adjourn the House.

Mr Elliot: I recognize that the member for Wellington (Mr J. M. Johnson) indicated that the member for Durham East may be arriving to speak, and should he do that I will be glad to cut my remarks short and give him the floor. I understand he was under the impression that this motion was going to be put second today, so he was planning on coming in a little bit later in the morning.

I too am pleased to stand for a few moments and speak on behalf of this resolution that was put by the member for Simcoe Centre "That, in the opinion of the House, recognizing the unique nature of owned-home leased lot retirement communities, the government of Ontario should undertake a review of these communities." It goes on to list a number of things that should be included in that review.

I think this is a very important, timely point at which this kind of resolution should be considered by this House, because the fact of the matter is that this type of retirement community is relatively new and it is very timely that a complete review take place with respect to whether or not the residents of retirement communities are being fairly treated. The allegations out there are that the seniors are being taken with respect to maintenance costs and excessive rents and a whole lot of other allegations. I think in large part this may be very unfair to people who have spent a lot of time setting up very worthwhile communities.

I feel rather close to this, because had I not been elected to this House, I would probably be entering my retirement officially, as of next month, from my own career. For a period of two years or three years, I was looking at a number of different options with respect to my own retirement plans and accommodation associated with that, and this was one of the types of accommodation that my wife, Anne, and I looked at.

There are a lot of benefits associated with it and most of them are economic, because in our preview of what was available out there, it

looked like private enterprise people had acquired sufficient acreage to set up a very nice retirement community atmosphere, the advantages being that if you bought into that kind of a situation you are going to be associating with a number of people in your own age bracket and all kinds of recreational facilities are set up.

I think it is unfortunate that if there is the odd exceptional case where advantage is being taken of the people who are resident in these retirement communities, the whole concept gets a bad name because of that, so at this point in time I think the member for Simcoe Centre is right on in suggesting to the government of the day that we do a very detailed review. As the member for Brampton South (Mr Callahan) said, it takes a legal mind to cover all the ramifications of a contract or a lease signed in this kind of situation.

I think what should happen is that people contemplating going into this kind of arrangement should very carefully, through a solicitor, make very specific arrangements with respect to their particular deal, because in particular cases that have been brought to my attention, generally there was a lot of goodwill but very little legal expertise went into the signing of the contract. A lot of the time, it was misinformation or no information being there that was causing the concern.

For example, in the case of maintenance costs, if you sign a contract that says they have to be done by a certain individual and you are locked into that particular person's remuneration scale, there is very little you can do about it.

These things are signed with the best of intentions usually, and I can see why the owner would want to have continuity with respect to maintenance of such a facility. You want to maintain an adequate level of service in that regard and make sure the community continues to have a good look about it, because there are going to be resales and you might possibly be wanting to enlarge the facility, sell some more units in it. All of that depends upon the community looking really nice from a saleable point of view.

Having said all of that, I do not think the one person who spoke on this motion from the opposition really highlighted the right kinds of information, starting off by saying that they were supporting the motion but then bringing in some things that really do not have very much to do with this kind of resolution that is before us.

I believe it is a good resolution. I commend the member for Simcoe Centre for bringing it to the House at this particular time. I think it is timely. I

would hope the particular agencies and ministries of the government that are responsible for this particular area, including that of the ministry that looks after seniors in particular, would take a close look at this motion and come up with legislation and regulations very quickly to cover this very important aspect of our life out there.

As everybody who is watching the population growth in Ontario knows, the very important senior sector of that population is going to be growing at an increasing rate over the next decade or two and it is very important that we treat these important members of our society most fairly, because they have contributed a great deal to society. They have done a lot for Ontario. I think it is only fair that they be treated fairly in their retirement years, so I support this resolution with a great deal of enthusiasm.

Mr Runciman: I am not participating in the debate, but I wanted to put on the record that the member for Durham East, who was planning to speak on behalf of our party, apparently has been tied up in one of those infamous traffic jams between here and his riding in Oshawa. I will also put on the record for our party that we are supporting the resolution.

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no other members wanting to participate in the debate, does the member for Simcoe Centre wish to wind up?

Mr Owen: Yes, I am delighted to do that. I am grateful and express my appreciation to the member for Brampton South and the member for Halton North (Mr Elliot) for their kind remarks in support of this resolution, and also to the member for Beaches-Woodbine for the support of the opposition party.

I have talked about this matter rather extensively in the past to the member for Durham East of the Conservative Party. That member has a very large retirement community in his riding and from time to time we have shared our concerns about what has been transpiring in these communities and what we thought could be done to improve the situation.

I would like to point out that this government, contrary to what has been stated by the member for Beaches-Woodbine, has addressed many of the needs in these retirement communities. As a matter of fact, many of the protections which are afforded the people who now reside in these communities are there because of the concern, the direction and the dedication of this government.

However, these retirement communities are relatively new to Ontario and we can always do

better. As we see them in operation, we see new things which can be considered.

Since I was elected nearly two years ago, I have also discussed the problems of retirement communities with the various ministries. For example, I am very pleased that the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs, the member for Dufferin-Peel, is not only concerned but here in the Legislature this morning showing her concern as she has always in the past for what can be done to improve the lifestyle for these people who have chosen to live in these communities.

I have discussed these difficulties and problems with the Minister of Housing. The Minister of Municipal Affairs has not only expressed concern but has done an in-depth study of retirement communities, and the results of that study are available or will soon be available for the province to look at.

1050

The matters involve consumer and commercial relations, and the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr Wrye) has addressed some of the difficulties we have had with regard to registering these leases. His ministry indicated to this Legislature, only a matter of months ago, that the people living in these communities can insist upon registrable descriptions of the lots on which they have their homes and the leases then could be registrable.

On the matter of health, I have discussed these matters with the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) as well. The Victoria Order of Nurses has been very active in going into these retirement communities, with support from our ministry.

I would like to point out that in my area, we had a substation for ambulance service at the south end of Barrie, and up until a year ago it was only functioning during daytime hours. We found out that 60 per cent of the use of the ambulance service at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie came from the south end of Barrie, particularly from Sandy Cove. Because of this, the ministry allowed us to open up 24-hour service, seven days a week, for the ambulance service to address that problem.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food is another ministry which has been involved. The Ministry of Community and Social Services has been involved, because of the visiting homemaker program that goes into these communities. We have the commitment of this government.

As has been pointed out by an earlier speaker, these are complex issues. We want to protect the people involved, but we also want to avoid

overkill. Remember, these retirement communities are happy places, they are people places. The people there enjoy each other's company and the activities they afford to one another. All we are here to do is to try to see that they are afforded the protection that the law can provide and that their happy times in these places will continue.

UNIVERSAL SICKNESS AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Mr D. S. Cooke moved resolution 2:

That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing the inability of the Liberal government to ensure auto insurance protection for Ontarians or progressive reform of the workers' compensation system and recognizing that numerous government studies have supported the concept of a universal sickness and accident system, the government of Ontario should introduce legislation during its current mandate to implement a universal sickness and accident insurance program; and further, that this legislation should be based on the results of a widespread open public consultation held between now and the introduction of a bill.

Mr D. S. Cooke: I am a little disorganized here because we were just in a House leaders' meeting and the timing did not work out appropriately. If I take a break to blow my nose or cough or whatever, I am dying of a cold today, and if members were wise they would wear masks or something to keep the virus away from them.

I am very pleased to be able to present this resolution today. In my 12 years as a member of the Legislature, this is the first time I have had an opportunity to be drawn at the beginning and have had an opportunity to present a subject that is near and dear to my heart, but, more particularly, that has been promoted for many years by the member for Nickel Belt (Mr Laughren) from my caucus. That is, of course, the concept of a universal sickness and accident program.

The resolution I have presented to the Legislature today refers to auto insurance. It also, of course, refers to the Workers' Compensation Board and that system of compensation. It does so because we see a universal sickness and accident system as a solution both to some of the problems we have had with auto insurance for many years and to the complete unacceptability that employers and employees, or injured workers, feel with regard to the workers' compensation system.

Currently in Ontario, people who are sick from disease or are injured at the workplace are compensated by a variety of programs. People injured on the job are compensated through the workers' compensation system. People injured in a car accident would be compensated through private insurance and perhaps a lawsuit.

Some people would be protected with sickness and accident programs in the workplaces. Many of the people who live in your riding, Mr Speaker, and in my riding, have the benefits of being organized with a union and, as part of the negotiations at the bargaining table, have the protection of a sickness and accident program.

All too often, however, individuals have to rely on sickness and accident or unemployment insurance or, in the end, if they have no private protection at all, they have to resort to disability benefits through the welfare system in Ontario, which we feel, and I am sure all members of the Legislature would agree, is a completely unacceptable system since the levels are so low and it is a means-tested program.

Depending on where you get hurt or how you come down with a particular illness, you could end up living out your days in the world in poverty. If you come down with an illness and you get workers' compensation, the benefits under workers' compensation after a long fight—if you qualify and if the board agrees to pay you—are relatively generous if you are at 100 per cent disability.

However, if you cannot prove that you came down with cancer, for example, at the workplace and you do not get workers' compensation benefits and you end up having to go on the disability program through the provincial welfare system, then you are going to be living in poverty for the rest of your days.

We have all had cases in our constituency offices over the years. I think a couple of the cases that stand out in my mind are people whose spouses or themselves have had multiple sclerosis. Lou Gehrig's disease is another example of a catastrophic disease.

The story is always very similar: "I had a good job or I owned a small business, and then I came down with multiple sclerosis or Lou Gehrig's disease or some other catastrophic disease. I had no private insurance and, as a result, I have had to apply for welfare and the disability program through the welfare system, and now I cannot survive at the same level that I did before."

Sometimes there are cases where the spouse has come down with the disease and the other spouse continues to work. Obviously the two of

them had been working because today in Ontario it is quite normal and it is also very essential in most cases that both the husband and wife work in order to afford homes and so forth.

When one individual comes down with a disease or is injured and does not qualify for any private system or the workers' compensation system, then that has a dramatic effect on the family income. They often come into our offices and say, "Why can't I qualify for the provincial disability program?" Of course, the provincial disability program is based on income, and if one spouse is still working, then the couple do not qualify for the disability program through welfare. As a result, the entire family's standard of living drops dramatically.

If we had a system of universal sickness and accident benefits, I think many of those problems and inequities and unfairness would be resolved. With one system, the workers' compensation system, as members know it can be literally months or years before your case can be resolved.

One case that I was very much involved in is a case that was reported in the press, the Pival case in Windsor. Mr Pival, in that case, worked at Wyeth in Windsor, and he developed a brain tumour. He became very sick, eventually died, and during the whole time that he had the disease, we were fighting his workers' compensation case.

It was a couple of weeks after his death that the Workers' Compensation Board said that he would be compensated for that disease, as the board had come to the conclusion that it probably did relate to the workplace, but I thought it very sad that he went through his last couple of years alive fighting the WCB and he died not knowing whether his widow was going to be adequately compensated and have financial security for the rest of her life.

1100

If we had had a universal sickness and accident program in Ontario, it would not have mattered whether the brain tumour was related to work or it was outside of work. There would have been a compensation system and that family would have been able to eliminate at least one of the very difficult aspects of the last couple of years of his life.

Currently then, a disabled person can receive income from private disability insurance, unemployment insurance for a time, Canada pension disability, workers' compensation, car insurance, a lawsuit from the injury, some compensation for victims of crime or the welfare system.

The bureaucracy involved in the hodgepodge of private and public compensation plans is absolutely mind-boggling, and obviously the cost of that bureaucracy is paid by all of us.

Whether we pay for the community and social services bureaucracy through our provincial taxes, the bureaucracy of the Workers' Compensation Board through assessments against companies or the private sickness and accident system through premiums at work, we all end up paying in the end. It is not a matter of instituting some major new government program that is going to cost the taxpayers millions and millions of dollars. We are talking instead about implementing a universal plan that would consolidate all of these avenues of compensation for people, rationalize all of these alternatives and provide some compensation to people no matter where they became sick or were injured.

The WCB alone costs companies, through assessments, billions of dollars. As you know, the welfare system costs millions of dollars. Again, I think that simply reinforces that a rationalization of the system as it is now in place would be not only more humane but obviously cost-effective and much more efficient for the taxpayers of this province.

There would be, as I have said, substantial administrative savings. There would not be costly disputes over the cause of disabilities. There would also be less confusion and expense with a single administration dealing with disability-related income replacement. For example, there would be no need to process welfare assignments or to determine Canada pension plan integration with pension supplements, as currently must be done in our workers' compensation scheme.

The best examples to illustrate the advantages are disease cases. Consider a worker who develops lung cancer after a workplace exposure to known toxins, some of which are suspected of causing cancer. The worker may have a family history of cancer and perhaps smokes. It is extremely unlikely that such a worker would end up receiving workers' compensation benefits. First, the workplace exposures and a possible cause for the cancer would have to be identified and a claim made. Second, the workplace exposure would have to be accepted by the Workers' Compensation Board or the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal as a probable cause of cancer. Both of these events are unlikely to happen currently.

The administrative costs of compensating for disease claims can be enormous. Various admin-

istrations may be involved—the WCB, CPP, welfare and a private disability insurer. This may create obvious concern about double payment and a consequential cost to avoid it. If a workers' compensation claim is made, there are likely to be large medical, legal and administrative costs in adjudicating that claim. Anyone who has dealt with workers' compensation knows that is the case.

The financial concerns are obviously important to all of us, but even more important than that, I believe, is the emotional trauma that people are put through fighting for something while they are also trying to get well or go through rehabilitation or just deal with their disease.

People are concerned that a universal sickness and accident system may take some of the responsibility for cleaning up the workplace away from employers. I think that could be dealt with in a couple of ways. First, we can look at how the system is paid, and we may in fact be able to develop a system that has assessments against employers if they are in an industry that has a lot of compensation claims or if they have a poor record.

More important than that, the current workers' compensation system obviously has not dealt adequately with sickness in the workplace and prevention of sickness or accidents in the workplace. The primary way of resolving that has to be by the passage of bills like Bill 208 and giving some clear power to the workers in the workplace to be able to enforce cleanups.

We also obviously have to have another enforcement system and fines that act as an incentive to companies to clean up their workplace. I do not think it is adequate to say on the compensation side that higher premiums are going to result in a workplace cleanup. It has not worked now. The way to do that primarily, I think, is through the Ministry of Labour, through huge fines that will act as an incentive when a company has been caught breaking the law and putting people's lives or health at risk in the workplace. With rigorous enforcement, I believe, of the occupational health and safety laws and substantial fines, that can act as the main deterrent.

It seems to me that the current workers' compensation system of payment has not deterred, as I have said, employers across this province. At the same time, the current system of compensation has put workers at risk. The risk of years of battles is in itself reason to reform the system. Tinkering with the workers' compensa-

tion system through Bill 162, which in our view is going to put us back even further, is not going to bring about a clear alternative.

There is much we can learn from other countries. My colleague the member for Nickel Belt has been to New Zealand and has looked at the universal system of compensation in New Zealand, and I am sure he will speak in more detail about that, but there are other jurisdictions that have implemented this plan. It is not something that is brand-new. We can learn from their experience and the benefits, as well as from some of the mistakes that have been made over there.

The point, however, remains that the current system in Ontario is unfair and inefficient and needs to be dramatically changed, not just tinkered with.

Mr Laughren: Hear, hear. Well said.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Of course.

I want to read briefly some of the comments that were made in the Thomson report about this issue, because I think that while the recommendations from the Thomson report were not as clear on this issue as we would like to have seen them, some of the statistics and some of the references make the point very clearly. I quote from page 105 of the Thomson report:

"As statistics presented in chapter 2 clearly indicate, a substantial proportion of social assistance recipients are disabled. Almost 90,000 people—or approximately 30 per cent of the combined GWA and FBA case load—are categorized as having some form of disability or impairment."

In this province 90,000 people, and obviously a lot of dependants in addition to this, are relying on a form of income which has been meanstested as totally inadequate, because they either are sick or have become physically disabled because of an accident. In Ontario, the richest province in this country, it is completely unacceptable that a person would have to live in poverty because he has become ill or disabled. The report goes on to say, on page 107:

"The disparities and inequities of existing income programs for disabled people have been thoroughly and well documented elsewhere. Some of the major shortcomings that force some people to turn to social assistance are outlined below.

"When total disability results from an injury that occurred on the job, workers' compensation is relatively generous. Earnings replacement amounts to 90 per cent of net income....Not everyone injured on the job will receive benefits

from this program, however. Benefits are not provided when the Workers' Compensation Board...decides that the injury did not result from employment. With many disabling conditions, it is not possible to determine cause. Cases involving back injuries, chronic pain, and diseases that may be occupationally related are particular sources of controversy....

"For people disabled by accidents, compensation may be provided by way of the legal system. In fact, however, compensation is paid only to between one third and one half of accident victims. In addition, some estimates suggest that anywhere from one third to one half of the total system costs are absorbed by administration, insurance companies, and lawyers. Those who do receive compensation can experience delays of one year or longer, and those in greatest need often settle more quickly for lower settlements because they cannot afford" the wait.

1110

Under "A New Approach" in the Thomson report it says: "Our view of the future suggests that the time has come to develop a comprehensive disability insurance system and to move quickly to implement such a program.

"The concept is not new. It has been the subject of numerous studies and reports over the years. A federal-provincial task force has been studying the feasibility of a national disability income program since February 1982. Three options for a disability insurance program have been considered and a report has been submitted to the federal Minister of Health and Welfare.

"Nor is the concept untried: the New Zealand government implemented a form of disability insurance in 1972, and we can benefit from that country's experience. Australia also tabled legislation...but it died on the order paper...in 1975."

The point is that time after time we look at issues. We study them for years and years and years and we do not take action because governments tend not to lead on issues like this; especially in this province, they tend to follow.

Now is the time—and especially this government—if this government wanted to make a mark on this country and to show the way in a particular area, this is where it could do it. By bringing in a universal plan and leading this country to a different and humane way of dealing with people who have come down with diseases or become disabled through accident, this government would accomplish something it would be remembered for, for years and years, just as the Saskatchewan New Democratic Party

government was remembered for the introduction of medicare.

We believe that this type of universal plan is and would be as significant to the people of this province and this country as medicare was back in the 1960s and 1970s.

I want to save myself about a minute to respond at the end but I hope that members of the Legislature will agree with this concept in principle and support it. I obviously hope that the government, which has passed at its own party conventions resolutions supporting this concept, will implement it and not continue just to study and talk about it.

Mr Runciman: Although we appreciate the good intentions of the member for Windsor-Riverside, our party is not going to be supporting his motion. We have a great deal of difficulty with many aspects of it. Certainly his reference to automobile insurance is one that causes us some concern.

We appreciate that the member and his party believe that government is the answer to virtually every problem that faces society. We do not share that view of the world. Although Mr Thomson did make this recommendation and we are supportive of the implementation of the first phase of the Thomson report, there are other aspects of that report that I think merit some very serious consideration by all members of this Legislature before we make commitments to those initiatives which do indeed have sweeping implications for this province.

The member made reference to the New Zealand program. I am sure his colleague the member for Nickel Belt is going to be speaking at length about the New Zealand situation. I hope he will make reference to the fact that recently there have been some very significant cost escalations of the New Zealand program, and we should make reference to the fact that the New Zealand program is not as comprehensive as the one the member is suggesting or the one that Mr Thomson is suggesting.

I think the cost implications of this proposal are significant indeed and while we have some assurances from Mr Thomson and from the member for Windsor-Riverside that these will be met in a reasonable way and that there will not be any undue burden placed upon the taxpayers of this province, I think that those kinds of assurances have to be looked at very closely. New Zealand is a good case in point in that respect, where initially the program did realize some cost saving but the long-range impact has been anything but cost saving.

This also makes reference to universality. That is certainly a topic for heated discussion in this country currently, whether the universality approach is the way to go. If we take a look at the problems of many provincial governments and the federal government in respect to the debt burdens that most jurisdictions currently carry, a good portion of those debts can be related directly to the concept of universality of social programs in this country.

Mr Laughren: Do what the free trade agreement tells you to do, Bob.

Mr Runciman: This is an opinion and a view that I held for some time prior to the free trade agreement. I want to say that this again is an approach of universality, so that someone who is earning a significant income is still going to be covered by this kind of approach.

It is the same situation we have in a whole range of programs. We have a rent control program in Ontario, for example, where we have someone earning \$400,000 or \$500,000 a year living in downtown Toronto in a rent-controlled apartment for \$450 a month. That is the sort of inequity and unfairness that is built into the concept of universality. We can apply it to a whole range of programs at both the federal and provincial levels. It is not the way to go.

We do believe there are some problems out there, especially in respect to the disabled in society. But let's target our programs for the people who are in real need in society and not have this blanket approach so that everyone is protected and covered and we are all paying stiff fees for this and putting all of our governments into significant levels of debt which are really limiting our ability to get into programs that we really do need in society.

I think the example of Heather and Frank Pearson of Ajax is a good one. Frank has cerebral palsy and is unemployed. He married a gal who is making \$14,000 a year. As a result of that income, Frank was cut off from his benefits under the family benefits allowance he was receiving. That sort of thing is totally inappropriate, but it is occurring under current legislation.

Indeed, I agree that we have to address that kind of situation, the one that Frank Pearson in Ajax is faced with; we have to have appropriate programs that will target individuals who are being penalized by legislation currently on the books. There is no doubt there are some real problems out there, but this universal interventionist "government-knows-best" approach is not the one that is going to work best for this province, in our view.

Again, on the government intervention aspect in terms of automobile insurance, I think we know where our friends are coming from and I think the government is heading in that direction. I predicted that in 1987 when they announced the establishment of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. Phase 2 of that is no-fault insurance and phase 3 is a crown corporation to operate automobile insurance, to sell automobile insurance in this province.

In any event, this is what I am getting at in terms of the government involvement in all of these programs; I sat through the hearings for Bill 2, as the member for Kingston and The Islands (Mr Keyes) did. I am not sure if anyone else in the Legislature today did.

Some of the testimony we heard before us was that in Saskatchewan, for example—programs brought in by an NDP government—every second automobile insurance claim involves a ministerial intervention, if you can believe that. Every second claim involves a ministerial intervention. That is how politicized the process gets.

We see what is going on here now. These people are getting deeper and deeper into this process and getting into more and more hot water because of the ever-growing involvement of government in the operations of this program. They have bought the bill of goods that this is a social policy matter and that government has to play a role.

I think one has to be careful about the further growth of government into all areas of society in this province. Again, I want to talk a bit about New Zealand. I think that perhaps there is more of an argument in respect to New Zealand. I do not buy the New Zealand approach, but it is a national approach; it is not done by a province or a state, it is done by the national government.

I think that whenever you look at this kind of a comprehensive program, it has to be done on a national scale. You cannot look at doing it on a province-by-province basis. If this approach is adopted, we may see even more significant growth in the population of this province than was forecast by the Ministry of Treasury and Economics a few weeks ago when it indicated we are going to have growth of about three million people by the year 2011, I think.

The Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon), by the way, did not know anything about that, and I think that says something about the forward planning of this government. When I asked him how he was going to react to that kind of growth in this province he did not know anything about it. He does not know how they are going to react to it

and what it is going to mean to education, health care, waste disposal, a whole range of very critical issues, when we are faced with this kind of growth in population.

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This kind of approach in terms of going it alone at the provincial level, albeit we may be the largest province in terms of population in this country, I think has ramifications in terms of its impact on our population growth and a whole range of other areas.

I want to indicate that indeed there are problems at the Workers' Compensation Board and most of us who have even modest levels of industrial operations in our ridings are faced with situations on a weekly basis whereby people are continually being frustrated with the maze at the Workers' Compensation Board. Indeed, that is a problem that has to be addressed, and I do not think it has been addressed adequately up to this point.

I had some high hopes with the new leadership a number of years ago that we would see some very positive things take place in terms of a more effective and efficient operation. I have not seen any meaningful signs of that occurring up to this point, but I am still going to hold out hope.

I guess I would like to see someone go into that board who has proven himself or herself as an effective manager in the private sector; someone who can come in and get rid of all the dead wood, get rid of all the red tape, get rid of all of these various stages of delay that workers in this province face in trying to get resolution of their claims and in terms of the problems that industry and business are faced with in dealing with this very onerous bureaucracy, an ever-increasing bureaucracy.

In conclusion, although we certainly agree that there are problems in society, especially with respect to meeting the very real needs of the disabled, we do not agree with the approach proposed by the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr D. S. Cooke).

Mr Ferraro: I rise to participate in this debate with some anticipation.

The member for Windsor-Riverside and the member for Nickel Belt certainly are strong proponents of this particular motion, and I am sure they have had similar motions in the past, being strong socialists as they are. I do not say that disrespectfully; far from it. Just as much as I respect that, I am sure they respect the fact that I am more of a strong free-enterpriser, and I say that with just as much pride, quite frankly.

I think the whole idea does deserve some comment about socialism and universality and more government control. It is worthy of note that at this point in time there is no province in Canada that has a socialist government. I think that says something about the mood of the Canadian people, quite frankly. Indeed, in a global sense, when one looks at very socialistic countries, in fact at communism, which is a significant degree of socialism to say the least, if not the ultimate, one sees a move towards free enterprise and less government control in countries such as Russia and China. I just find that interesting.

I find it interesting too—and I do want to comment that when the member from the Conservative Party started off—

Mr Laughren: I won't call you a fascist, I promise.

Mr Ferraro: I just say to my friend the member for Nickel Belt that he should try to control his gums for a little bit. I will listen to him when he speaks.

In any event, the Conservative member for Leeds-Grenville started off by saying that his party will not be supporting this motion. I just want to say right off the top that my caucus has not caucused this particular issue. Indeed, being private members' hour, quite frankly, I think it should be up to the individual members. Having said that, I certainly hope that indeed members will take a good look at it and make their own decisions, as I am sure they will.

I find it interesting too that the member of the Conservative Party in his condemnation, if you will, of universality, and his condemnation of my government, used the word "interventionist" and all the rest of that. I find it interesting that when I look upon previous actions of his government it is somewhat inconsistent with his viewpoint today.

I speak specifically of 1975, when the Conservative government of the day brought out rent controls, a universal program of controlling rents in buildings that were built prior to 1975. That definitely flies in the face of the comments that were made. Also, very briefly, it brings to mind the Ontario health insurance plan. The Conservative government in Ontario negotiated the deal with the federal government of the day and brought universal medical coverage to Ontario. So there are some inconsistencies.

Having said that, there are also inconsistencies with my friends from the socialist New Democratic Party. I have yet to hear a New Democratic Party member stand up and say, "We're against

small business." That in itself, in my view, is the epitome of free enterprise.

I suggest with great respect that all political viewpoints have some variants, if you will, in their idea of socialism and free enterprise.

I want to say, and I am sure it will come as no surprise to the member for Windsor-Riverside and the member for Nickel Belt, that I will be voting against this motion.

I suggest that this motion, as far as I am concerned, was doomed right from the start. The reason is not so much on the specific debate dealing with universality of the sickness and accident system, or even the other debate that seems to be prevalent in society: whether or not there should be a guaranteed annual income. I think there is some merit in debating that, and indeed, I support that type of debate.

The difficulty with this particular motion is in the premise. It starts off, and I want to reiterate, by saying: "In the opinion of this House, recognizing the inability of the Liberal government to ensure auto insurance protection for Ontarians...." I want to deal with that specific point. That in itself compels me to vote against the motion. It is, in my view, confrontational and totally erroneous, and it does not do much for the member's attempt to debate the substance of the motion per se.

The wording, as I reiterated, indicates that he says the Liberal government was incapable of ensuring auto insurance protection for Ontarians. What does that mean specifically? Does it mean that people who require auto insurance in the province of Ontario cannot get insurance? I suggest that is one interpretation, and it is categorically wrong.

If members would like to present cases to the Ministry of Financial Institutions where people cannot get insurance, I can assure them as parliamentary assistant to the minister that we will facilitate the same. Automatically, members are going to say, "Yes, but it is expensive." I agree. In some cases, it is expensive. If you have had three or four accidents or you have had some drunk driving charges, you are going to pay for it. I think most Ontarians would agree with that. But the reality is, the wording says, "the inability...to ensure auto insurance protection." I suggest, to some degree, that is erroneous.

The reality, dealing with auto insurance, is that the government had three alternatives. I have said this before. We could do nothing, in which case the insurance premiums were rising at an unbelievable rate, for good reason as far as the insurance companies were concerned; we could

take over the insurance industry, which is advocated by my friends in the opposition, particularly the NDP; or we could take the approach we did take: that was to set up an independent committee, composed of consumers and people familiar with actuarial expertise, to look at the situation.

We have learned much and the public has learned much about the insurance industry in Ontario. We have taken some of the mysticism out of the boardroom and brought it to the forefront, in a very public, open—albeit confusing perhaps in certain situations, but understandable way.

Members will know that we took that action on 23 April 1987 when we set up the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board.

1130

Mr Laughren: That is intervention in the marketplace.

Mr Ferraro: My friends are saying it is intervention in the marketplace. I would not call it intervention, as opposed to saying it is re-education, if you will. They would advocate that we go in there with the storm troops, automatically seize all presidents of all insurance companies and indeed put in place a socialistic public insurance program without even indicating the costs of such a program. We could debate the ramifications of a public as opposed to private insurance program ad nauseam, I suspect.

I find it particularly interesting, I really do, that every time they advocate a public-run insurance program, they do not talk about the fact that 80 per cent of all premium costs, as we have found out from the insurance bureau, are related to claims costs. I have yet to see them debate or present to the House in any substantive way the costs of a public insurance program, the dislocation of thousands of employees.

The member for Windsor-Riverside talked about bureaucracy. Indeed there is bureaucracy, but I suggest there is a significant amount of bureaucracy in every public or government-run institution or form of intervention, if you will.

The final point I want to make is the last line, which I find particularly interesting. It says all this study of a universal sickness and accident system "should be based on the results of a widespread open public consultation held between now and the introduction of a bill." I totally agree with that, but I find it totally inconsistent with many of the arguments that have been exuded by the opposition in recent weeks about the fact that the public automobile insurance system, totally public, is ridiculous, a

waste of taxpayers' money. Indeed, it is obviously acceptable now but it was not in previous discussions.

Mr Laughren: First, I would like to commend my colleague the member for Windsor-Riverside for bringing before the House a matter of great importance. I do not believe you need to be a rocket scientist to know that the workers' compensation system in Ontario is in a mess. Why else do we have Bill 162 out there, which is being opposed universally by the very people it is supposed to help? I think most of us on all sides would agree, if we dropped into our constituency offices, would have to come to the conclusion that the present workers' compensation system in Ontario is in a mess and is not working.

As far as the automobile insurance system in Ontario is concerned, here we have a government that believes in the free enterprise system, which brought in an automobile insurance board as the only mechanism of setting rates, then overruled the board and said, "We don't like your rates," and is bringing in a bill this afternoon that is going to reverse that process. What could be more of a joke than the way this government has handled workers' compensation and automobile insurance in this province? Nothing could be more of a joke.

It is true, I went to New Zealand about four or five years ago specifically for the purpose of meeting with the people in their Accident Compensation Commission. When I was there, I met with employers and employee groups, government people and people at the accident commission itself. Nobody, including the employers, would go back to the old system. They do not want it. They think the old system was ridiculous.

They have some problems with it. They say, "We don't like the way some people get covered when they have an accident playing a sport," that kind of thing; but nobody, absolutely nobody, wants to go back to the old system. The same applies in the western provinces of this country. Once you had, as the member for Guelph (Mr Ferraro) would say "the socialist experiment" of public automobile insurance, once that was in place in those western provinces, did any of them go back when the governments changed and there were free enterprise governments in place? Not one. Even though they had the opportunity to get rid of the public auto insurance plans in those western provinces, not even a Social Credit government would change it.

Mr Ferraro: They changed the government instead.

Mr Laughren: Well, when the governments changed, they left the public auto insurance in place, so the argument that it is inefficient is absolutely ridiculous.

I would like to quote from a study here in Ontario a couple of years ago by Professor Weiler. This was 1983, so some of the numbers would have to be updated, but this is what Professor Weiler said:

"Suppose that a single person earning \$30,000 a year is permanently disabled in an automobile accident on his way to work. If he can establish that someone else is entirely at fault, he will collect tort (legal damages) calculated at \$2,500 a month, nontaxable. If the accident occurred while he was at work, perhaps driving a truck, he will collect about \$1,400 a month in compensation, again nontaxable. If he was not at work and cannot establish that the other driver was at fault, he will collect \$600 a month in 'no fault' auto benefits. If he was injured at home as a result of a crime, such as a burglary, he will collect \$500 a month. But if he was injured at home due to nobody's fault and must rely solely on CPP or Gains programs, he will get only \$300 a month."

What in the world kind of equity is that? There is no equity in accidents in this province.

What we are trying to say to this government is that it really should not matter where you get hurt, the point is you are hurt and you need to be compensated, you need to be treated and you need to get rehabilitated.

That is what the government of New Zealand decided, and the same argument that it is a national plan there and we are only a province could be made for medicare. Medicare started as a provincial program in Saskatchewan. Now it is a federal program administered by the provinces. It makes no sense to make that silly argument that it has to be national. I would prefer a national, universal disability program; no question.

In New Zealand, what happens there is that you can take the plan as a pie, if you will, and divide it into three pieces. If an earner gets injured at work or at home, the employer pays the first week's salary and then after that the plan kicks in, whether that earner was injured at home or at work. The other piece of the pie is auto, and that is paid for by the car owners of New Zealand. If you get hurt in a car accident, it comes out of that premium. The third is "others," so that if someone gets hurt at home or, as I mentioned, in a burglary, playing a sport or whatever, then that is picked up.

We have plans here too. We have decided in this country that nobody is going to starve to

death, so we pick up the tab anyway, one way or another. What this does is make it a lot more logical.

Chairman David Slater of the Ontario Task Force on Insurance had some interesting things to say about the system in New Zealand:

"Overall, one can conclude that the money flowing through the workers' compensation system and the automobile fault/insurance system was sufficient to finance the no-fault scheme and that the scheme is almost certainly cheaper than a continuation of the old system. It was estimated in 1982 that the accident compensation scheme resulted in annual savings of over \$100 for the owners of private motor vehicles. Similar results have been predicted in Australia and the United Kingdom. It has been claimed that a similar scheme in Australia would save the country \$1 million a day and the Pearson commission—which was a UK commission—"found that a move to no-fault resulted in an annual saving of %84 million."

Every group that studies a universal program comes out in favour of it—every group. I would like to have the members opposite, instead of ranting and raving about socialism or free enterprise, take a look in a thoughtful way at studies that have been done on universal programs. I would defy them to show me those studies that say it is not a good idea. Professor Weiler said it was a good idea. The Thomson report said it was a good idea. The Slater commission said it was a good idea. Virtually everybody who studies this program says it is a good idea.

They can get up on their hind legs and say, "No, it's socialism; we're not going to buy it." Fine. They can keep extracting their pound of flesh from those people who are least able to defend themselves in our society; just keep on doing it, my friends. I think they have an obligation to do something better than that, because I will tell them something: The present system is not working, and the sooner they come to that realization, the better.

1140

I happen to believe that people who work are making a real contribution to our society. I think collectively we have decided that the work ethic is not such a bad thing and that when people work they make a contribution to all of our wellbeing, some more than others of course. Therefore, we have a community responsibility to people who get injured, regardless of where they get injured and regardless of fault. In New Zealand, everyone is covered unless it is self-inflicted—

then, of course, it is not covered—or they are injured in carrying out a crime.

I am appalled by some of the arguments the member for Guelph made. I thought we could have a civilized debate in this chamber on whether or not a universal system was right for the people of Ontario. Instead of that, the government members are getting up on their hind legs and pretending this is a battle over capitalism versus socialism. I want to tell them that if the way they are treating injured workers in Ontario is the kind of benchmark they want to use for the treatment of those people in our society who are least able to look after themselves, then they are welcome to it, but that is not the reason they got elected with a huge majority in this province.

I believe they have an obligation, just as their convention said they did. It was a Liberal convention that said there should be a universal program. The Treasurer said it was an idea whose time is coming. The member for York Mills (Mr J. B. Nixon)—no relation, I am sure he would want me to say—also agreed at that same convention that it was time in Ontario we put behind us that vast array of programs. They overlap. They are expensive. They are illogical. They are inequitable in that they pay people different rates for the same kind of injury. It makes no sense whatsoever.

Somebody is going to have to tell me the difference between someone who gets injured on the job and is in a wheelchair for the rest of his life and someone who is born with a debilitating disease and spends the rest of his life in a wheelchair. I ask them to tell me how they justify that morally, paying one person an income several times that of the other person for the rest of his life. How is that fair? How do they justify that?

In New Zealand, they have not brought in sickness. The member for Leeds-Grenville is quite right, it covers only accidents. They are looking at sickness because they see the illogic of the present system. I believe it is a matter of time until sickness is included in the New Zealand plan as well. I very much hope so.

I have enjoyed this debate very much and I commend the member for Windsor-Riverside for bringing it before this House.

Mrs Sullivan: I want to start out with some personal remarks about the resolution itself that is before us. I like and respect the member for Windsor-Riverside. I assume his colleagues do as well because they elected him as their House leader. Although the member has himself expressed with some humility surprise at the

confidence his peers placed in him, I have never shared that private surprise. I believe that here is a man who knows the rules of the House and the niceties of its traditions. Here is a man who does his homework on House matters, in the Board of Internal Economy and in the corridors, or maybe even the back halls.

But I am surprised and indeed chagrined that the member has framed his resolution in the way he has. The preamble is heavily partisan and I believe it would have been useful to have discussed some of the concepts he has subsequently put forward in the debate outside of that partisan framing. I think we all could have benefited from that. Because of that, I will not be able to support this resolution. I also have other reservations relating to the proposal that I will speak to in my remarks on the essence of the bill.

The government has examined many aspects of comprehensive disability insurance since a standing committee, I believe in the early 1980s, recommended this kind of approach. It has participated in a federal-provincial group, which was mentioned earlier, that has studied the prospects for a national disability scheme. More recently, the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board has been asked to analyse two options for no-fault auto insurance.

Those initiatives, along with such others, which once again have been mentioned, such as the Social Assistance Review Committee report recommendations and discussions about a compensation fund for victims of medical misadventure, contribute to our understanding about the implications of a comprehensive accident insurance scheme.

It should be noted that the costs of comprehensive disability insurance could be substantial if adequate benefits were to be provided. The member for Leeds-Grenville has spoken a bit about the situation in New Zealand where the no-fault accident program has met with high benefit and administrative costs that are unfortunate. Given the uncertainty about the future costs of a comprehensive scheme and the administrative complexity that would be required to implement it, reform of the existing array of disability insurance programs may indeed be preferable to one comprehensive scheme. I wish we had been able to discuss that kind of approach in a less partisan way.

We are now in the process of major substantive reforms of the largest no-fault eligibility insurance program in Ontario, the Workers' Compensation Act. As members know, the workers' compensation systems, 12 in all through work-

ers' compensation boards, in Canada are based upon principles that were defined and articulated at the turn of the century. It is our belief these principles are still relevant and applicable today. Workers' comp occupies an intermediate position between the two primary methods for reimbursing lost income. The methods or models are, of course, on the one hand the tort liability system, and on the other hand the social welfare network.

In contrast to the tort liability approach, which is currently used to settle compensation claims out of motor vehicle accidents, workers' compensation is based on a no-fault premise in the awarding of benefits. Our system of workers' compensation is the result of a historic tradeoff. We all know that the tradeoff meant workers in Ontario gave up their right to sue their employers in court, and therefore the opportunity to collect damages for all the economic and other losses they have incurred. In return workers were guaranteed protection against income losses due to workplace accident, irrespective of fault.

It was no surprise to any of us who participated in the Bill 162 hearings recently that several individuals and groups stated that the present system of workers' compensation is essentially sound. There are reservations, and we are familiar with them. Workers complain about benefit levels, difficulty in proving claims, and delays and poor treatment at the hands of board representatives. Employers, on the other hand, have been heard to complain about the escalating cost of assessments, fraudulent claims and malingering.

But what is most revealing is that both workers and employers were united in defence of the system when it was recently challenged in Newfoundland. Participants in the court case included attorneys general from three provinces and workers' compensation boards from six provinces and one territory, as well as representatives of employer groups and organized labour.

Under Canadian systems of workers' compensation, the historic tradeoff of which I spoke earlier has meant that workers receive benefits and rehabilitative assistance without having to establish any liability on the part of the employer. What is essentially a no-fault insurance plan has replaced a legal system that would have involved greater delays and large legal costs.

In Newfoundland, the widow of an employee who was electrocuted contended that the death of her husband was due to the employer's negligence. She then tried to bring an action against the employer rather than accept survivor's

benefits under the Workers' Compensation Act. In the trial court, she argued successfully that the denial of her right to sue constituted discrimination under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

At the Court of Appeal, however, the court ruled that the scheme of workers' compensation was neither unfair nor unreasonable. It provided compensation for medical aid, rehabilitation services, job search and medical rehabilitation with no delays in receiving benefits, no legal costs, no dependence upon the solvency of an employer for compensation matters that would arise out of the issue, no issue of liability to be resolved, no reduction in compensation when the injured worker was negligent, and tax-free benefits and coverage for short-term disabilities.

1150

The point is that the basic operating principles of workers' compensation in Newfoundland were proven to be fair and reasonable, and we believe that in Ontario the same applies. As legislators, we must seriously ask ourselves if we want to confuse the principles guiding compensation for auto accidents with those for workers' compensation.

It is difficult to compare circumstances surrounding accidents in the workplace environment to those as a result of auto accidents. The workplace brings together various economic needs: the need to produce goods and services, the need to earn an income, the need to be productive. Accidents occurring in this environment must be dealt with differently from those occurring on the roads and highways.

There are 500,000 claims filed every year with the Workers' Compensation Board. Those claims that are eligible to receive benefits do so at the employers' expense. Some form of universal accident insurance that extends coverage to both the workplace and automobiles would require a different form of financing, which would shift the burden away from employers.

In New Zealand, its form of universal accident insurance has meant that every driver must pay a levy. Every taxpayer also contributes to the maintenance of the program. This is a far cry from the funding arrangements now operating within the Ontario system of workers' compensation where employers, not ordinary taxpayers or car drivers, pay for workplace accidents.

Again, this approach comes very close to paralleling the social assistance model of income replacement. I think we should be careful not to confuse workers' compensation with social welfare. Social welfare carries with it the concept

that a community as a whole is under an obligation to care for the economic needs of those unable to care for themselves. That is not what drives workers' compensation.

I believe, as my party has debated and concluded, that there might be merit in a comprehensive disability system in the province. I do not concur that the workers' compensation system should be dismantled by its inclusion in a comprehensive scheme such as put forward by the House leader of the opposition.

I regret the way the member has framed his resolution and I will not be supporting it at the time of the vote.

The Speaker: Are there any other members wishing to participate? The member for Riverdale for up to seven minutes.

Mr Reville: Seven minutes may seem like a boon to members of the Legislature who have heard me speak for much longer than that on several occasions, and I hope will want to again.

One of the things I found most amazing in terms of knowledge that you pick up as a member of Parliament was a meeting I had that was chaired by the then member for Sudbury East, Elie Martel. We were looking into concerns that workers had about the response our society makes to loss. We talked to a person who described the different outcomes that were possible for people in Ontario today who had suffered a catastrophic loss, who had become, say, quadriplegic.

In Ontario, depending on how that misfortune befalls you, there is a remarkably different future ahead of you. If, for instance, you are born with a disability that is profound, probably what will happen to you in this province is that you will get family benefits, \$300, \$400 or \$500 a month.

If, like Barbara Turnbull, you are working in a convenience store and you are shot and become a paraplegic, then you will get \$500 a month from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

If you slip and fall in your own kitchen, suffer a profound trauma and are rendered a paraplegic, again, you may get family benefits.

If you are crushed in a workplace, and the Workers' Compensation Board decides you have suffered a work-related injury, then you will get a percentage of the salary you had earned.

If you go to the lottery system of the courts, as did the parents of the young fellow in Brampton who suffered a terrible bodily injury while riding on a dirt bike—originally the courts awarded \$6 million and found liability against the municipality of Brampton; half of which, of course, was for gross-up. It was overturned on appeal and he got

nothing. If his parents should die, as I guess one day they will, then he will be on family benefits.

If you win the court lottery and you get the \$6 million, you pay \$3 million of that to the federal and provincial governments for taxes. You are left with \$3 million. The amount of money it costs you to pay for the services you need—an attendant perhaps, renovations to your home, a redesign of your work career; and this has happened to people.

I know of a lawyer, for instance, who suffered an injury that left him a quadriplegic. He was able to rearrange his law practice so that he could continue to work out of his own home. He made an income of about \$60,000 a year, which members of this Parliament would think was a fairly significant amount of money. After that gentleman got finished paying for his attendant, his special equipment and his medications not covered by health insurance, he was living below the poverty line.

Those are the kinds of outcomes a person in this province can expect. I think it is wrong that you get a terrible outcome or a modestly bad outcome or a slightly-below-the-poverty-line outcome depending on which category you fall into. I have never heard a description that more makes the case for a universal sickness and disability plan than those kinds of real-life stories, which regrettably happen to people all the time in Ontario.

In those cases where a system has been developed and put in place, you then go and fight with that system for the benefits you are entitled to, and we all know, every member of this House knows, how hard a fight that can be. In many cases, those benefits are more theoretical than real, but at least you have access to the system.

The woman who falls off the chair in the kitchen may have no access to a system like that. If I am run over by a garbage truck in front of my house, perhaps the city of Toronto's self-insurance will kick in and I will be one of the lucky ones who gets the \$6 million, but I suspect I will not be. Even if I do get that, it will not cover all my expenses.

The New Democratic Party has been talking about universal sickness, accident and disability plans for some time. We began to talk about them with particularly topical vigour when in fact the gnomes of Zurich began to do strange things to reinsurance moneys about two years ago. Municipalities found themselves unable to afford insurance, hospitals found themselves unable to afford insurance and groups like the Rose Parade people, who are volunteers, could not afford to

pay the municipalities insurance money so that they could have their parades. All sorts of voluntary activity was cut off at the knees.

I think society has to plan to compensate people adequately for loss. The best way to do that is to support the resolution of the member for Windsor-Riverside.

1200

Mr D. S. Cooke: I would like to thank the members who have participated in the debate and respond to a couple of points. First of all, I would like to say something to the member for Halton Centre (Mrs Sullivan) who said that the evidence is that the workers' compensation system is basically sound. I would like her to go tell that to the Bendix workers in my area who worked with asbestos or the gold mine workers in this province. There are many others who would say to her that she is totally and completely wrong.

To the member for Guelph, I always thought that it was our party that was accused of being overly ideological. He has proven to me today that he and his kind of instinctive approach to these types of issues show that ideology prevents us from finding some basic solutions. This government has to decide whether they are here to simply get re-elected or whether they are here to eliminate the injustice and unfairness that currently exist in this province. If they want to eliminate some unfairness and injustice, they would show the way in Canada by bringing in a universal sickness and accident program.

The Speaker: We will now deal with private members' notice of motion 6, Mr Owen's resolution.

RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

The Speaker: Mr Owen has moved resolution 6.

Motion agreed to.

1209

UNIVERSAL SICKNESS AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE

The House divided on Mr D. S. Cooke's motion of resolution 2, which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes

Breaugh, Bryden, Charlton, Cooke, D. S., Grier, Kormos, Laughren, Mackenzie, Martel, Morin-Strom, Pouliot, Reville.

Nays

Adams, Bossy, Brown, Callahan, Cleary, Collins, Cooke, D. R., Cordiano, Cureatz,

Dietsch, Elliot, Epp, Faubert, Fawcett, Ferraro, Fleet, Hart, Henderson, Jackson, Johnson, J. M., Kanter, Keyes, LeBourdais, Lupusella, MacDonald, Mancini, Marland, Matrundola, McClelland, McGuinty, Nicholas, Oddie Munro, Offer, Owen, Pelissero, Pollock, Polsinelli,

Poole, Reycraft, Roberts, Runciman, Ruprecht, Smith, D. W., Sola, South, Sullivan, Tatham, Wilson.

Ayes 12; nays 48.

The House recessed at 1211.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1330.

MINISTER'S RESPONSE TO
ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr B. Rae: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would like to raise with you a question of privilege regarding the conduct yesterday of the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley), if I might have a few moments to put forward my point.

The Speaker: Very good.

Mr B. Rae: This is the first time in my experience as a member of any Parliament when the members of a legislative body have been treated, and indeed the public health of the province has been treated, with such contempt by a minister of the crown.

Between the official opposition and the third party we asked a particular, specific question to the Minister of the Environment yesterday not once, but a total of 13 times. We asked a very specific question. The minister refused to answer that question on each occasion. He then went out of this place, was prompted by the principal secretary of the Premier (Mr Peterson), members of his own staff and the government House leader, and 45 minutes to an hour later met the press and answered that very specific question as soon as it was asked by members of the media.

I simply want to signal to you, sir, that I regard a minister who would treat the House in this kind of way, who would treat in this way legitimate questions put to him very specifically and clearly, who would refuse to answer that question and then choose to go outside and almost as a casual kind of aside refer to the time when he knew about the contamination of fuels in this province, as treating this House with contempt, as treating the privileges of members of this House with contempt.

What is the point of having a question period if after spending a length of time asking a very specific question, the minister just ignores that question and chooses instead to stonewall it until he is told by his advisers that his tactic of stonewalling is simply not going to work? It shows contempt for the House. More important, it shows contempt for the people of this province and for the public health of this province. That is why this minister should resign.

Mr Harris: I would like to take a couple of moments to comment on the point raised by the

Leader of the Opposition, certainly to support everything he has said and put forward and also to indicate to you, Mr Speaker, as you reflect upon our comments today, that it may be you will want to reflect on them and think in a serious way about the rights not only of the members of this House, but indeed of Ontarians, and about what question period is, what the purpose of question period is.

I do not want to restate the facts of the situation. I think they are clear to all members and I think the Leader of the Opposition has stated them very accurately. I would add to the importance of the comments that were raised by the Leader of the Opposition that I believe, sir, that the public is increasingly wondering what question period is for. Is it a time for members on all sides of the House to get information, to get answers to questions and to find out what is going on? Is it a time, through that questioning, as is our duty, for that information to be made public and to be available to the public or is it some kind of game? It really concerns me that the public seems to be getting this sense.

I say on behalf of my party that we do not think it is a game. Yes, politics enters into this; partisanship politics enters into it. But we do not think that is the principal reason for question period. The contempt that was shown for both parties of this House yesterday and for all the public of Ontario, through us, by the Minister of the Environment is unacceptable.

Mr Speaker, I do not know what ruling exists for you as our leader, as our parliamentary arbitrator. I do not know what vehicle exists for you to perhaps censure the minister. Indeed, I suggest to you that this minister ought to resign. Indeed, I suggest to you that there may not be that vehicle there for you and it may be that you may have to convene a meeting of key representatives of all parties in this House to look at what authority and what powers you have when such a blatant abuse of our rights as we saw yesterday is allowed to take place.

Hon Mr Conway: If I might briefly address the point of privilege the Leader of the Opposition has raised, in dealing with it I would like to make two or three observations.

The first is that I spent almost all of yesterday in the House. I heard my colleague the Minister of the Environment answer a number of questions put by my friends in the opposition during the course of question period. I want to say that

the Leader of the Opposition has made a number of charges about who prompted whom. I think those are allegations he might want to really think about because he accuses me of doing some things that certainly do not square with my understanding of the reality of which I was part.

I must say that not only did the Minister of the Environment participate in question period, but he was in his place later in the afternoon addressing the situation at some length in the emergency debate that was asked for by the opposition. I well remember yesterday afternoon around five o'clock the Minister of the Environment setting out in some detail, once again, the situation that concerned honourable members opposite.

As well, in so far as a contempt of the House is concerned, I have to say that the people who watch the daily proceedings of this Legislature would probably share with me a concern that if there is a contempt of this House, it is when honourable members duly elected to do business and to debate the issues of this province in this place simply walk out and refuse to participate, as we saw yesterday.

I have to say to my friends in the opposition that of course they have a right and a responsibility to ask questions, and the government has a right and a responsibility to answer those questions. It is up to the opposition to decide how they choose to ask their questions, and it is equally up to the government to decide how it chooses to answer those questions.

I want to say to the opposition House leaders that we have seen from the government perspective activities here over the past number of months that concern us and I am sure concern the reasonable people of Ontario. We see ministers not being allowed to introduce bills and we see ministers of finance—the provincial Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon)—not being allowed to read budget.

We have to say that there are in fact developments here that we believe are not very responsible, that are contemptuous of the place and of the traditions. We would say the opposition bears a very considerable share of the responsibility for some of those activities.

I just want to say, concerning the point of order, that the Minister of the Environment was here yesterday, both during question period and during the emergency debate; he gave an accounting of his actions in a way that I think explains what his department has been about, and it was not the Minister of the Environment who

walked out of this chamber yesterday, but rather the opposition.

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Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I have listened very carefully to the three members who have spoken. As I understand, the Leader of the Opposition rose on a point of order and it turned into a point of privilege.

I recall that on many other occasions in this House similar points have been raised and I, along with other Speakers, have made rulings on similar circumstances. As the members will know, the Speaker is here to make certain that the standing orders, as set out under power of the members who are sitting here, are maintained as I understand the standing orders, particularly during question period.

It is not up to the Speaker to state that a minister must answer in any certain way. I think I have tried to fulfil that as well as I could in the past. I must also say it is up to the Speaker not to become involved in what takes place outside the House. However, there have been occasions when I have reminded members that it is common courtesy to make announcements within this House.

I feel it is not a point of privilege.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CONTAMINATED FUEL

Mr Mackenzie: Members of this House have been treated to the spectacle of thousands of Ontario citizens being exposed to some of the most toxic and deadly contaminants in our industrial society: polychlorinated biphenyls, where a minor spill will close plants or even highways, and dioxins and furans, which are a real danger to health in even minute amounts. These chemicals, mixed with fuel by sick and unsavoury characters, have been shipped to Ontario. Their use can contaminate homes, hospitals, garages and greenhouses.

Gas station attendants and construction workers may be more directly affected than others by the nature of their contact with contaminated gas at the pumps and the use in construction of fuel for machines and heavy equipment. Here the real need to bid low makes cheaper fuel a real incentive. These workers can be exposed at levels that would not be allowed in a plant with a straight PCB spill.

This shocking disregard of the health and safety of workers and the public is underlined by this government's hesitation in bringing in

fundamental health and safety legislation such as Bill 208. The government has put a minister's ego and an investigation ahead of the public's right to know in terms of a threat to its health. This government listens to a powerful employer lobby that says current levels of death and injury in the workplace are acceptable and that the right to manage business should supersede a joint, equal and co-operative right to a safe and healthy workplace.

If that is the position of this government, it will stand condemned and convicted of accessory to workplace slaughter in the eyes of workers across this province. The Premier (Mr Peterson) should wake up and listen to his heart and not to the corporate wallet and proceed with Bill 208.

ABANDONED RAIL LINES

Mr Pollock: Approximately two years ago, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr Kerrio) invited me to join him to fly over the abandoned railroad line known as the Marmora subdivision. The day was an ideal day for flying and we had a good view of the abandoned railroad line. The minister had an excellent chance to assess the terrain and acquaint himself with that particular part of eastern Ontario.

The former Minister of Tourism and Recreation committed funding for a feasibility study. This document contained the pros and cons and costs and revenues of this being a recreation trail. The government has appointed an interministerial committee of four different ministries; namely, Transportation, the Environment, Tourism and Recreation, and Natural Resources. Their job was to hear briefs about abandoned railroad lines all over Ontario.

There have been many other jurisdictions that have taken over abandoned railroad lines; to name a few, Quebec, Michigan and Florida. These states and that province claim they are a boost to the tourism industry. Florida regards its abandoned railroad lines as state park corridors. When is the Ontario government going to assume responsibility for some of these abandoned railroad lines?

EDDIE REDMOND

Mr Adams: The Peterborough Petes are the élite of the Ontario Hockey League. They are the club with class, decade in and decade out.

The Petes were founded in 1956 and have produced more National Hockey League players than any other OHL team. There are currently 40 former Petes in the NHL. Coaches Nielsen,

Greene, Bowman, Martin and Keenan all graduated from the Peterborough club.

The Petes have always been concerned about the education and social life of players, as well as hockey skills. Players drafted to Peterborough become a real part of the community.

Coach Dick Todd and the 1988-89 Petes are worthy representatives of this fine tradition. They have won the club's sixth OHL title and are once again representing our province in the Memorial Cup.

The Peterborough club meant a great deal to Eddie Redmond, who died last week. Ed joined the Petes' executive in 1968 and remained associated with the club. He followed its successes and was especially proud of this year's team.

I am sure my colleagues will join with me, the people of Peterborough and the Peterborough Petes hockey club in offering condolences to the Redmond family. Eddie Redmond was a distinguished sportsman and citizen of this province.

NORTHEASTERN ONTARIO ONCOLOGY PROGRAM

Mr Laughren: I have written the following letter to the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan):

"I have received a copy of a letter written to you by Dr R. Corringham, director of the northeastern Ontario oncology program. Dr Corringham has, understandably, taken offence at a conversation he had with your deputy minister, Dr Martin Barkin, on Friday, May 5, just three days before your scheduled visit to Laurentian Hospital on May 8.

"Dr Barkin told Dr Corringham that if he raised the question of Dr Anthony Ho at the press conference then there would be no more visits from the minister and no more 'goodies' for Sudbury.

"Madam Minister, what is going on? When you allocate funds for the cancer treatment centre in Sudbury, you are not doing us a favour, you are carrying out your duties as a Minister of Health. You are spending public funds, not your own, and certainly not Dr Barkin's. I personally don't give a damn if I ever see your face in Sudbury, but you have an obligation to fund the northeastern Ontario oncology program without engaging in 'bully-boy' tactics and intimidation.

"I can only assume at this point that Dr Barkin was acting on his own and that you will offer an apology to Dr Corringham, who has worked tirelessly to make the cancer treatment centre a reality."

POLICE OFFICERS

Mr Runciman: I rise to speak once again in support of police officers across Ontario and to recognize the concerns they have expressed over many provisions of the Race Relations and Policing Task Force report now under consideration by the Solicitor General (Mrs Smith).

The Police Association of Ontario says that police are petrified by some of the proposals and that many of them must have been drafted by, and I quote, "an idiot." I agree, and like many police officers I am concerned about how this trendy, soft-on-crime Liberal government will react to these proposals.

This is a government that sends two cabinet ministers to the funeral of a man shot by police while driving a stolen car, yet fails to say one word of condolence to the family of an Ontario Provincial Police officer killed in the line of duty.

This is a government that restricts the weaponry of police and will not permit soft-tipped bullets, while at the same time the criminal element utilizes Uzi submachine guns and high-powered rifles.

This is a government that spouts endless rhetoric about fighting illicit drugs, but takes virtually no real action to combat the growing menace.

This is a government that ignores the reality of street gangs and their increasing violence.

This government, this Liberal government has, through its anti-police rhetoric and action, severely shaken police morale and is doing its best to thwart the efforts of our police to maintain the high degree of safety that is not only a custom in our province, it is taken as a right.

GUELPH SPRING FESTIVAL

Mr Ferraro: On a more pleasant note, I am pleased to have this opportunity to make sure all members of the House are aware of the Guelph Spring Festival and indeed to invite them all to one of the highlights of the Canadian artistic calendar.

The festival opened last Friday in Guelph and will run until 3 June, a period in which my city will be, without question, the entertainment capital of Canada. The members may already know this festival started in 1967 as a national vocal competition, but now serves as an international showcase for everything from children's concerts to world premieres of ballets and operas.

This year's program alone, for example, will include the first North American visit of Moscow's Poliansky Choir and the world premiere of

a murder-mystery detective opera written especially for the festival. The festival was set up 22 years ago to honour one of Guelph's favourite sons, Edward Johnson, who was a renowned opera singer and former general manager of New York's Metropolitan Opera.

I know the members of this House will make every attempt to be part of this four-week celebration of the arts and would want to offer their best wishes to the festival's artistic director, Louis Applebaum, the staff of the Edward Johnson Music Foundation and everyone involved in putting Guelph and Ontario on the cultural map of the world.

1350

ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Mr Philip: No one can question the value of the Ontario Human Rights Commission in bringing about a fairer, more humane and more sensitive society, but at the present time its ability to do so is clouded by a series of allegations of mismanagement, irregular hiring practices and favouritism.

We have seen resignations of key staff people and indications of poor morale among the staff crippling the work of the commission. Leaders of visible minorities have wondered why members of their communities have been passed over for key appointments, and the minister himself has admitted that in the past few days he has received numerous phone calls from groups and individuals wondering what is happening to the commission.

In spite of this, the minister, rather than showing leadership, has acted as an interested spectator. Even today, we have an indication that he has no statement to present to the House to tell what action he intends to do to take care of the matters and allegations of the Human Rights Commission.

It is time for the minister to act; it is time for him and this government to establish a royal commission to look into the allegations. Nothing less will clear the air; nothing less will serve the people who feel that they have a grievance; nothing less will serve the interests of those people who feel that they have been abandoned by this government.

VISITORS

The Speaker: That completes the allotted time for members' statements. Just before I call the next order of business, I know all members would want me to draw their attention to three

former members in the lower west gallery: Pat Hayes, Ross McClellan and Milton Gregory.

Mr Brandt: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I do not know of anyone who served in this Legislative Assembly by the name of Milton. Could you qualify who that might be?

Mr B. Rae: This Bud's for you.

The Speaker: If I made a mistake, I apologize.

Hon Mr Sweeney: I welcome our former colleagues back to the House again.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Hon Mr Sweeney: For the past three years my ministry, with the assistance of the volunteer bureaus of Ontario, has been honouring volunteers, who are the backbone of our social service agencies in the community, with the Community Service Award.

Each year, one person is selected from that list of 40 Community Service Award recipients to receive the minister's award as Volunteer of the Year.

I am delighted to be able to introduce my ministry's Volunteer of the Year for 1988, Larry Knapp of Sault Ste Marie. Today Larry, his wife Rhea and son Philip are seated in the east gallery and we welcome you.

[Applause]

Hon Mr Sweeney: This is truly an exceptional person. Larry is a representative of all the wonderful volunteers—young and old, from all sectors in the community—who give of themselves in order to improve the quality of life for someone in their community.

Larry is an artist who, a while back, lost his vision completely.

The professionals and volunteers with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind in Sault Ste Marie helped Larry to accept the fact that in spite of his physical limitations, he still possessed extraordinary gifts and talents.

One example is his talent as a leader and ambassador on behalf of people in northern Ontario who have physical limitations and disabilities. Larry is working diligently to have buildings designed to allow easy access to persons who may rely on the use of a wheelchair or other mobility aids.

For the last 12 years, Larry has been extremely active with the Sault-Algoma advisory board of the CNIB—three of those years as chairman.

In addition to his role as chairman and head of the public relations and fund-raising committees, Larry is involved in the agency's direct services.

He is training others who have lost their vision to maintain their independence through the use of new technology and by offering personal counselling. Larry is providing the same type of training and empathetic support that he himself received when he lost his sight.

Larry Knapp inspires and helps these people because he is such a marvellous example.

Instead of giving up his art, Larry made the transition from painting to sculpture.

Larry Knapp was selected this year because he is helping all of us to appreciate the abilities of people. He is helping all of us to appreciate the gifts that are freely offered by persons, regardless of their age, status in society or limitations.

Mr Knapp and the volunteers that he represents help us to become more caring, more respectful and more considerate as a society.

On behalf of the people of Ontario and all of my colleagues in this Legislature, thank you, Larry.

BEEF AND SHEEP MARKETING

Hon Mr Riddell: I would like to present to the members of the House the results of the beef cattle marketing vote held in April 1989.

As my honourable colleagues are probably aware, the vote was announced in February 1989, at the recommendation of the Ontario Beef Marketing Task Force. The mandate of that task force was to develop a plan of action aimed at achieving a long-term, viable beef industry in Ontario. The mail-in ballot that beef cattle producers received last month provided them with the opportunity to vote on the future of the marketing system for their industry in Ontario.

Today I wish to report the results of that vote to the House. Twenty thousand producers cast valid ballots; 72 per cent voted "no" to the establishment of a producer-controlled marketing commission to regulate the sale of all Ontario beef cattle. As a result of this significant percentage, Ontario beef cattle producers will continue to have individual choice of marketing methods.

Earlier today, I met with the executives of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association and the Ontario Beef Producers for Change and reported the results of the vote.

The beef industry has debated the market-structure issue for several years without a resolution. Now that all producers have had a chance to vote on this issue, I have encouraged both groups to work co-operatively to address the challenges facing the beef industry.

I have also indicated to them my willingness to proceed on the other recommendations of the

Beef Marketing Task Force report, which affect the whole industry.

Members of the House will also be interested to know the results of the sheep referendum. In a ballot sent out last month, Ontario's sheep, lamb and wool producers were asked if they supported the continuation of the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency.

Of the 1,529 eligible votes cast, 72 per cent supported the continuation of the agency. I am pleased that the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency has been supported by such a high percentage of voters.

RESPONSES

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Mr Morin-Strom: I am very pleased to be able to respond to the announcement today by the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr Sweeney).

The selection of a fellow Saultite, Larry Knapp, as the Volunteer of the Year for Ontario, I think, is certainly a very appropriate one. For many years, Larry has been a true inspiration to the people of my community and our area of the province.

Larry started his career as a teacher of art in our school systems, someone who wanted to work for people and pass on a skill he had to others in our society. That is a profession that is a particularly important one to our community as Sault Ste Marie has historically been a community of great artists, a community that was a centre of focus for the Group of Seven, historically, and has generated many excellent artists in recent years.

1400

Unfortunately, Larry faced a very difficult personal tragedy, as many would look at it, as he lost his sight more than a dozen years ago, obviously a condition which is absolutely critical to the profession he had chosen. But Larry has taken that disability and really turned it into an ability and has transformed his own life and his own abilities into continuing in the art profession himself in the area of professional sculpture work. More important for all of us in our community, he has turned it into an asset in terms of what he has put into the local community, particularly the blind community through the Canadian National Institute for the Blind in Sault Ste Marie and the work he has done more recently with respect to building design for the physically and visually handicapped.

His work has truly been an inspiration to the people of Sault Ste Marie and now is being

presented as an illustration of the kind of work which is an inspiration to everyone in Ontario. I thank you so much, Larry.

Mr Allen: As social services critic for my party, I want to add my voice to that of my colleague and the minister and to congratulate the minister in his excellent choice. As critic also for the Office for Disabled Persons, I have sat with the minister in that instance where we ranged through scores of applicants, persons with disabilities who have done amazing things in their communities as volunteers. It is just literally true that there are scores of people out there whose lives, like Larry's, have become an inspiration, a triumph over personal adversity turned into service to our communities. We certainly praise them deeply for what they do.

None the less, without taking a single moment of glory away from those volunteers or those with disabilities who serve our communities so well, I want to at least note that the government and the past government have taken advantage in significant ways of the volunteer tradition, sometimes to the disadvantage of our social services. I refer, for example, to the case in point of the associations for community living, which have arisen out of the volunteering spirit. Because of that, the transfers the government has given to those agencies have unfortunately been of a rather less than adequate character. The staff are paid against a background of volunteering which has meant that their compensation has been rather less than adequate.

As I say, that does not take away from the importance of this occasion, but I think it is a note that we want to put before the government, as they make these awards, that they should not take advantage of the volunteer spirit in unfortunate ways for agencies involved.

BEEF AND SHEEP MARKETING

Mr Laughren: In response to the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr Riddell), I was pleased that he was able to announce the result of the vote today. The beef cattle industry now actually has spoken and they have spoken very strongly on how they feel. We were looking forward with some interest to that vote. The minister in his statement said, "Members of the House will also be interested to know the results of the sheep referendum." As someone who was raised on a farm, I can say that I have often wondered what sheep were thinking.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Mrs Marland: This is one of the occasions in this Legislature when it is indeed a privilege to

rise, when one can join in the commendation of Larry Knapp. We are all proud today to share in the recognition of you, Mr Knapp, as Volunteer of the Year for 1988 in this province.

Those of us who have worked in the community as politicians—as leaders, hopefully—and as volunteers at some time, know that nothing government can ever do in any community can ever replace the depth or quality of work of our volunteers.

I know, as he is recognized specifically today, that he realizes he is sharing his honour as a representative of all the volunteers in this province. His particular talents and willingness to share those talents are indeed an inspiration for everyone. For him to become the exemplary role model which he has become to all of us, volunteers alike, he obviously has become a motivator and an inspiration which we should all follow as carefully as we can. Obviously his compassion, caring and commitment are indeed outstanding.

On behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus and all the people in Ontario who depend on volunteerism to make their daily lives happier, more comfortable and more enjoyable, we indeed pay him the greatest tribute we possibly can and thank him from the bottom of our hearts.

BEEF AND SHEEP MARKETING

Mr Villeneuve: In reply to the announcement by the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr Riddell) today: It is not really surprising to see that the vote was overwhelmingly for status quo in the red meat and beef industry. I do hope the two warring factions take his advice and work together. Numerous fiery meetings were held across the province to try to explain both sides of the issue, and the producers have now spoken. This is but the beginning.

I also address my comments to the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon). The Ontario Federation of Agriculture took a very neutral position when the beef vote came up, but it will not be taking a neutral position on the possibility of the government unilaterally changing the farm tax rebate. I know the Treasurer had a meeting with them and they are not sure what the message was he conveyed to them regarding the farm tax rebate.

To the Minister of Agriculture and Food, we certainly have a situation in rural Ontario where there is an 18 per cent reduction in net farm income predicted in 1989. This is a very poor time to talk about discontinuing farm tax rebates, about reducing the Ontario family farm interest

rate reduction program by 60 per cent. These are very important aspects of agriculture.

I am speaking to the minister in charge of Agriculture and Food in the province of Ontario, to the past president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. Yes, we need input from the federation of agriculture, but to the minister in charge of Agriculture and Food and the Treasurer in the province of Ontario, Ontario farmers receive the least financial support of any province in Canada for the major industry of agriculture and food.

This is but the beginning. This is a very serious situation and let us hope the government of Ontario does not throw the farmers to the wolves—or should I say the sheep to the wolves?

ORAL QUESTIONS

CONTAMINATED FUEL

Mr B. Rae: Last day we tried to get some answers from the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley). He did not have the courtesy to tell us; he went outside and told the press that he in fact knew about the question of contaminated fuel some time in January. Other evidence was given by other officials in his department that in fact the department has known for some time before that.

Whether the minister has known for five months or whether his department has known for eight months or a year, what I want to ask the minister today is this. Again, it is a very specific question. Can the minister tell us why, when he had apparently solid information in January with respect to this problem, he took none of the steps which, as minister, he is obligated to do, to inform the public, to advise the public of a potential health risk?

1410

Hon Mr Bradley: What the member would have liked me to do, obviously, is to act on rumour and allegation. When there are rumours that circulate or allegations that come to the attention of the investigations and enforcement branch, its job is to investigate to see if there is any basis for those rumours.

Does the Leader of the Opposition think I should develop a blacklist of companies, for instance, that might be suspected because of the rumours that are forthcoming or the allegations that are made? I do not think I could responsibly do that.

If I want to protect the province, I have to ensure that these people are put out of business, not simply report on rumours and allegations, so that we develop as extensive an investigation as

possible, including interrogation of people or discussion with people and including the actual testing that takes place at such places as the border and the plant gates.

Mr B. Rae: It is interesting that it would take not a member of my party but someone who I understand is a member of theirs, Jim Conrad, who is also with the Canadian Federation of Independent Petroleum Marketers.

In a letter to the Premier (Mr Peterson) today, Mr Conrad said: "Jim Bradley is only damaging the reputation of government when he says he has the answers when he doesn't." He also says that there has been information available to the ministry and to the Ministry of Revenue with respect to the tax evasion problem and with respect to the contamination problem for a considerable period of time.

The minister alone knows what the source of his information was, but his executive assistant tells us that the Ministry of the Environment was going on police information. Steve Naum of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the United States says that the information the ministry is working with is information that has been provided by the FBI. That is not a rumour—

The Speaker: Question?

Mr B. Rae: —that is information that is provided on the basis of police sources. The minister knows that when he talks vaguely about rumours.

I want to come back to my question and I want the minister to answer it specifically. Why did he take no steps whatsoever to inform the public, to protect the public, to advise the public of a potential health risk?

Hon Mr Bradley: I say to the Leader of the Opposition that if his approach is to act on allegations which are made that come to the attention of the Ministry of the Environment—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Bradley: When these allegations come to our attention, when no charges have been laid, I do not know how the member expects that we can act on that basis. What we have to do and what we have done is initiate a strong, very extensive investigation that involves, as I say, questioning people, obtaining tips from people and in fact doing some tests, either at the border or in other places, to determine the veracity of the allegations that are made. When we can obtain that information, of course we are then in a position to take the kind of action that the member suggests should have been taken.

Mr B. Rae: Let me put it to the minister that if he has been conducting tests—he says he got this information in January. The only tests he has told us about are tests that took place in April. If he is telling us today that he took tests back in January and none of those tests proved anything or showed that there were any contaminants in any fuels, let him say so. Let him make that statement today. Let him state categorically that the tests he has conducted—he now says "other sites." He does not tell us where, apart from at the border. Let him stand up and say that he has determined as a result of those tests that there is in fact no problem.

The fact that the minister has not had the courtesy to tell us or the people of this province what the results of the tests were indicates that there is indeed a problem. I want to come back to his obligations that are clearly established under the Environmental Protection Act. If he has reasonable and probable grounds to believe there is a problem, under section 7 of that act he has to act.

I want specifically to ask the minister this question: If he has reasonable and probable grounds to launch an investigation which has taken some five months, involving four ministries at least, by the admission of his own ministry—

The Speaker: Order. Would the member take his seat?

Hon Mr Bradley: I go back to the fact that I indicated—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Once again, we will just wait, if you want to waste the time. Order. Minister, response?

Hon Mr Bradley: When we have that kind of substantiated evidence to present, we are then in the position to take action. That is what I have said to the member.

When we have results which show, in fact, that there is a case to be made and there is confirmation of these allegations, then I will be in a position to announce action on the part of the government; particularly action which is designed to get at those who are perpetrating this crime, if there are those in the province who are doing so. Whether it is people in Ontario doing it or whether it is people in other jurisdictions doing it, that is what our investigation is designed to do, when we have the results.

When I said, for instance—the member makes reference to January. I was informed in January, as I said, that there were allegations—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Bradley: The member is interested—that there were allegations that were going to be investigated in this regard, and our ministry then commenced an extensive investigation which involved the tainted fuels aspect of it. They indicated that could be a possible way people might be disguising wastes. So they commenced that investigation. One of the aspects of the investigation, I say to the leader of the third party if he is interested, was that the blitz was conducted at the border and at the plant gates. There were other aspects of the investigation as well.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. New question.

Mr B. Rae: Perhaps I could ask the minister this simple factual question. He has had five months now, by his own admission, in which he has apparently been taking tests, according to his answers to my first questions; tests at the border and tests at other sites, among other things. I would like to ask the minister, has the government in fact conducted tests at various sites across the province, what are those sites and can he tell us the results of those tests?

Hon Mr Bradley: The tests did not commence in January, as I indicated to the member in my response. What I said was that it was brought to my attention by my ministry in January that there were allegations being made that this could be a problem. They said, "We are going to commence an investigation into this specific aspect of it, because we think there could be problems."

They indicated that to me and then proceeded to commence an investigation. Part of that investigation involved the plant-gate physical tests that took place, plus those that took place at the border stops themselves. As a result of those, as I said to the member, if there was evidence that could indicate that in fact that is a problem, we would be prepared to take action.

In addition to that, I indicate that the federal government is also involved in tests of that kind and, as a result of these tests, I have said to the Solicitor General (Mrs Smith) that on those aspects which might involve a criminal conspiracy, the OPP would be asked to look at those aspects and the Ministry of the Environment would continue to look at the aspects which relate to the environmental consideration.

1420

Mr B. Rae: Let me perhaps ask another question to it, because I think the minister is

simply indicating today in the House that he knew in January, that he was advised by his ministry. He has not told us what his ministry knew and when it knew it; he has only told us when he knew and what he knew.

When the minister received the allegation with respect to the possible contamination of fuel in January, can he tell us why he did not at that point immediately start conducting tests with regard to the possible contamination of Ontario's fuel with polychlorinated biphenyls? If the minister heard about it in January, why was he not ordering his officials—

The Speaker: Thank you. The question has been asked.

Hon Mr Bradley: They commenced the investigation in January of this year because they said it was brought to their attention through allegations and rumours that in fact this could be one way in which waste—and the member should keep in mind there is more than one problem with wastes that exists in North America, and one of the problems could in fact be tainted fuels.

As a result, they were to commence an investigation. First of all, they have to determine whether the rumours have any substantiation, whether the allegations have anything to them. They develop such an investigation with the co-operation of others, and then they try to produce the results which will either confirm or not confirm the allegations which are made and which will build a case designed to put crooks out of business, if indeed that is what they can find.

Mrs Grier: We on this side are very tired of the Minister of the Environment treating serious questions to a fog of obfuscation and refusing to answer them. Does the minister not realize that PCBs in contaminated heating oil was a public health threat when he first heard about it, was a public health threat when he began to investigate it and is a public health threat today? Why has he not told the people of this province what he knows about it and what they ought to be doing about that threat?

Hon Mr Bradley: A couple of points come to mind. I was watching *The Journal* last night and I made some notes on that. Some of the notes are rather interesting. The people who made some suggestions on what might be done—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Bradley: Incidentally, one individual was Colin Isaacs of Pollution Probe, a former colleague of the member's, who has expressed his concern about this. What he said, I think, is

something most people in this province would agree with. He said:

"It is something that has to be done at a governmental level right across the country, and I think it is very important that we set up programs to stop this at the source, rather than trying to protect ourselves one on one...on a personal level, I do not think it is going to do too much to me unless I have my nose stuck right up their exhaust pipe."

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Bradley: I am simply sharing with the member one point of view that was expressed.

The Speaker: Order. Perhaps I should remind all members of standing order 24(b). I am sure there are many members who would like to ask questions if they were allowed.

Mr Brandt: My question is also for Bingo Bradley, the Minister of the Environment.

Hon Mr Bradley: He stole that from you, Bob.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Brandt: I would like to remind the minister that in addition to the environmental laws of this province, we also have the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, which requires the minister to act in a particular way under certain circumstances. Under subsection 11(1) of that act, I would like to advise the minister, it states very clearly that a minister shall "disclose any record to the public or persons" if that record reveals "a grave environmental health or safety hazard to the public."

As has been pointed out to the minister and as he has now acknowledged, he has known about a serious potential health hazard in this province since January. This particular matter has been brought to his attention by what I would consider to be an agency of some repute in the United States, namely, the FBI. Why has the minister not acted after all these months, knowing full well that he has a legal obligation to respond under the act?

Hon Mr Bradley: On matters that are directly related to a prosecution, for instance, the member would know that there is an opportunity to develop a case on the part of a police force or an investigative force, and those matters must be proceeded with in that particular manner.

I know the member has never been a fan of the prosecution route. He has criticized me by saying that we prosecute too much and we do not work with the companies enough. That is fair.

Mr Brandt: I have never said that.

Hon Mr Bradley: The member has said that.

I know that is not the member's approach. I know he has criticized our ministry for being more prosecutorial than it ever was when he was in office and that it is better to work with the companies. I am not saying "these companies"; I am saying the member has said that general approach is better. But we have to work in this direction if we want to find out who the culprits are and protect the interests of the people of this province, and that is what we have been attempting to do.

Mr Brandt: The minister can try to divert this issue from the attention it is now receiving and the focus that it has on him by talking about other matters, which I would be delighted to debate with him in this House at some other time.

But I would like to remind the minister that on 4 May 1989, there was a press release from the Ministry of the Environment which indicated that Canadian Pacific had been charged under the environmental acts of this province for a particular matter that it was responsible for. That matter took place in April 1988. It took the ministry one full year to lay charges for what, in the case of Canadian Pacific, was a grass fire.

If it takes the ministry a year to get the evidence to lay charges against Canadian Pacific for a grass fire, how long was the minister prepared to let toxic chemicals be transported across the US border into Ontario? How long was he prepared to allow that to go on before he was prepared to—

Hon Mr Bradley: We are proceeding as quickly as possible with our investigations at this time. We have laboratory analyses of the samples that have been taken in the process at the present time. We have indicated that the federal government as well, with our assistance, had been conducting some investigations yesterday, and I expect the federal minister will be releasing those results in the very near future. As I have indicated, this is the kind of evidence that is going to be needed to provide those charges to be made.

Mr B. Rae: You knew it in January and you are doing test results in May. This is unbelievable.

Hon Mr Bradley: The member is not correct there. The member is inaccurate when he makes his interjection in that way, but I will go back to him with another question perhaps.

The Speaker: Disregard the interjection.

Hon Mr Bradley: I say to the member that we are developing a good case. I suspect that we will be moving as rapidly as possible on this to ensure that we can come forward with a prosecution if we have sufficient evidence to do so. I think he would know that you have to have the evidence to do so before you can lay the charge.

1430

Mr Brandt: Some time ago in this House there was a member of the opposition who addressed a question in a similar tone to the then Minister of the Environment, who happened to be the Honourable Keith Norton. I read from Hansard, 3 May 1983:

"Surely the minister's responsibility is to move ahead of time, not after the fact. His entire approach seems to be that we will wait until someone gets very ill or until there is evidence, and then we will move on the situation." And further, if I might briefly, "He is waiting for evidence of major health problems before he is prepared to move, and by that time it is going to be too late."

In responding to those particular quotes, I would like to advise the Minister of the Environment that the speaker—

The Speaker: Question?

Mr Brandt: —who raised the question at that time was the now Premier of this province, the member for London Centre (Mr Peterson). Now we are asking the minister to move in quite the same way as the member for London Centre did back on 3 May 1983. How does he respond by moving after the fact as he is now suggesting—

The Speaker: Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Minister, response?

Hon Mr Bradley: First of all, we all know how rapidly the member's government moved on these kinds of issues in terms of prosecuting those who were responsible for crimes against the environment, and we all know the number of times his government did so was somewhat diminished from what we see today because there is a different thrust.

Mr Brandt: In your own modest way, you might say that.

Hon Mr Bradley: No. It is a different thrust. It is a different philosophy to use and I accept the philosophy that has been enunciated in debate. In fact, they believe we should work with the companies first and worry about prosecutions, if at all, at some later time. At the Ministry of the Environment, in the tests that we have conduct-

ed, to this point in time for the fuel-blending part of the investigation we looked at, we have not yet found any results that would show the detection of these substances. If we did, we would be prepared to move forward, but when you look—

Mr Brandt: Are you saying no PCBs?

Hon Mr Bradley: No PCBs in any of the fuel samples we have taken to this point in time. That is what I am saying to the members opposite—

The Speaker: Thank you. Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. It would be helpful if all members would show respect to other members when they are on their feet.

ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Mr Brandt: My question is to the Minister of Citizenship. The minister will be aware of allegations that were made today by the former director of compliance of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, Jim Stratton.

Mr Stratton stated he has documented proof that the decision to fire him was made three weeks before he was interviewed to apply for the position that he held formerly with that particular commission. The document he refers to that was handed him on 27 October was signed by the former Deputy Minister of Citizenship.

Can the minister tell us and this House if he is aware of the allegations that have been made, and can he confirm or deny that his ministry was involved in the rather blatant act of unfair treatment and discrimination that impacted on this particular employee?

Hon Mr Phillips: I am not aware of the specifics of that. I will say, however, in light of the increasing concerns being raised, that in addition to the fact that we have asked the Legislature to review this, and I think there is all-party agreement on that which I gather will come before one of the legislative committees, I have also asked that we conduct a human resources review of the various allegations. My deputy minister is now drawing up the terms of that and over the next few days we will be proceeding with that.

Mrs Marland: It is unfortunate that members of the standing committee on public accounts have not informed the Minister of Citizenship of what took place this morning. I placed a motion this morning asking for the Ontario Human Rights Commission to come before that committee. That motion will be dealt with next week, but already the Liberal members of that committee

were questioning the procedure and my right to place that motion, and in particular the member—

The Speaker: Order. Is your question, "Is he aware?"

Mrs Marland: Mr Speaker, I do indeed have a question of the Minister of Citizenship. I want to tell this minister I attended—

The Speaker: Order. Point of order?

Mr J. B. Nixon: On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: The member for Mississauga South made allegations about what I may have said this morning before the standing committee on public accounts. The matter is on Hansard. I ask her to check Hansard. In no way did I question her right to put notice of a motion before the committee. In fact, I only suggested to her—

The Speaker: Order. I have listened to both members. I must remind all members that I am sure the committees can decide what takes place in the committee. Would the member place her supplementary.

Mrs Marland: In attending the press conference this morning of Jim Stratton, who is today a private citizen, for the reference of the minister, I want to quote one part of what he said in order that the minister can answer my question.

Mr Stratton said that Ms Molloy is one of the finest human rights' lawyers it had been his privilege to work with. She resigned because she could not condone a coverup of the unfair and discriminatory hiring practices of the Ontario Human Rights Commission since it had been taken out of hand by Raj Anand. He also said he entered five competitions and lost them all, including one for the position.

The Speaker: Do you have a question?

Mrs Marland: My question is, with these challenges to the function and the operation of the Ontario Human Rights Commission—one of the most sacred commissions, I may suggest, in this province; people died for rights in this country—

The Speaker: Order. Would the member take her seat. Minister.

Hon Mr Phillips: I said two days ago, and I will say it again, that it is very important we recognize a couple of things.

In December 1987, I rose in the House to say that we were strengthening the Ontario Human Rights Commission and that the commission staff would henceforth report directly to the chief commissioner. That was designed to give the commission independence. They have been operating independently for good reason, I think

for the very reasons the member outlined. We want to ensure it protects the rights of all individuals in this province.

I said before that the chief commissioner would be happy to appear before a legislative committee. That is now set up.

I said the other thing too earlier: It is important, I think, that we clear up these recent allegations. I am concerned about them. There is no question of that. I am concerned about a perception in the community that the Ontario Human Rights Commission is not acting in a way, in its own operation, it would want the rest of the community to operate in. I am concerned about that. That is why, as I say, I have asked our deputy to conduct a human resources review of the commission to get at those kinds of issues.

Mrs Marland: I am interested to hear the minister say it is operating independently when one of his deputy ministers signed the dismissal letter of Jim Stratton. That is a very interesting statement.

I would like to ask the minister, based on Mr Stratton's statement that when he was given final notice, he did not speak out publicly because he was afraid: "I was afraid for my ability to earn a living. I was afraid of the ruthlessness of those people. I was afraid of being called a sore loser. I want you to know that I am a good loser in a fair contest, but these competitions were rigged."

With this kind of accusation, is the minister happy at this point to wait until that committee hearing before he suspends Raj Anand as the chief commissioner?

Hon Mr Phillips: I think it is very important that one follow some process and not necessarily prejudice an individual; it is extremely important. What we are dealing with are the two things I mentioned before. The chief commissioner is quite happy to appear before an all-party legislative committee to answer those questions.

1440

Mrs Marland: He cancelled his press conference for this afternoon. That is how happy he is to be public.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Phillips: The second thing is that as I said earlier we are quite prepared to do the human resource review, as I said to ensure we get at those—

Mrs Marland: He had a press conference at 3 o'clock and he has cancelled it.

The Speaker: Order. Would the member for Mississauga South control herself? Thank you.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Phillips: I think I was virtually finished, but I will finish my comment that we are looking at the issue of the hiring practices in this review that I mentioned to the members earlier.

CONTAMINATED FUEL

Mr Mackenzie: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Did the Minister of Labour know, as did the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley), as early as January 1989 that workers, especially gas station attendants and those in construction, were being exposed to highly toxic, tainted fuels? If he did, what did he do about this intolerable situation? If he did not know about the great occupational health risk these workers were facing, why not? What did the Minister of Labour do to protect workers from the toxic effect of tainted fuels?

Hon Mr Sorbara: It is an interesting question. It is simple to answer. No information had come to the ministry through its regular investigation procedures relating to workers, whether in refineries, gas stations or any other place in the province.

Mr Mackenzie: That is almost unbelievable. This had a potential effect on workers and the Minister of Labour was not one of those notified by the Minister of the Environment. Can the Minister of Labour tell us if this scandalous situation does not demand the government move quickly to give workers more control over their health and safety, and this includes bringing in a bill such as Bill 208 so that workers have a tool to use? The minister knows that fuels laced with polychlorinated biphenyls, especially being burned, can be some of the most hazardous chemicals in the workplace.

Hon Mr Sorbara: If I read Hansard and analysed the question, I think I would find the question is whether we would be bringing in a bill like Bill 208. I have to tell my friend the member for Hamilton East that Bill 208 is on the order paper. I think virtually every member in this House was visited today by a representative or two from the Ontario Federation of Labour, expressing their desire to support Bill 208—if I look at the handout—and to strengthen it and pass it. I encourage members, as well, to do that.

CANCER TREATMENT

Mr Eves: I have a question of the Deputy Premier. The Deputy Premier will be aware of allegations that were referred to by the member for Nickel Belt (Mr Laughren) in statements

today, allegations that the Deputy Minister of Health has been threatening doctors in the province—in this case, Dr Corringham, the chief of the northeastern cancer treatment centre in Sudbury. Does the Deputy Premier consider that sort of conduct, if these allegations are proved to be founded, appropriate from a deputy minister of the crown?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am not aware of the facts in the case. I will determine what those facts are.

Mr Eves: I would like to quote from a letter Dr Corringham wrote to the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) on 8 May 1989.

"Dr Barkin told me that he wished to give me some "advice". He went on to say that if I used the press conference "as a platform" to raise the issue of Dr Anthony Ho, then there would no more 'goodies' for Sudbury: no more visits from the minister. The point that I wish to make in this letter is that I do not consider this appropriate behaviour for a senior government official. In fact, to so threaten an individual like myself who is only trying to do his job is outrageous and shocking. I do not think I need elaborate further. It hardly seems necessary to remind Dr Barkin that we happen to live in one of the most advanced democracies in the world. You may rest assured that no amount of intimidation, bullying or threats, is going to prevent me from exercising my personal rights as a citizen of Ontario."

The Speaker: Is there a question?

Mr Eves: Yes, there is a question, Mr Speaker. My question is this: The Premier (Mr Peterson) moved in the space of 24 hours to remove another deputy minister in this minister's government because he made the mistake of approving a biography—

The Speaker: And your question?

Mr Eves: —which referred to the fact that he had a degree instead of a diploma. Will the Premier—

The Speaker: Order. Deputy Premier.

Hon R. F. Nixon: It appears there is a difference of opinion between the good doctors and the honourable member is taking sides. I do not know any of the facts in the matter, but if there is any thought that Sudbury might be spared the visits of cabinet ministers, I am glad to inform him that this will not be true and that I myself am looking forward to going to Sudbury in the next two weeks.

TELEVISION AND FILM INDUSTRY

Mr Daigeler: My question is to the Minister of Culture and Communications. On 15 March, the council of European ministers issued a directive that would require member countries of the European Community to accept severe quotas on foreign television programs and co-productions.

This directive is part of a series of agreements leading to the formation of the single European market in 1992. From statements by the federal Minister of Communications, it appears that Quebec-France co-productions are safe and will be expanded rather than curtailed. May I ask the minister whether the same could be said about Ontario television productions in English or French, or will they fall under the European quotas on foreign productions?

Hon Ms Oddie Munro: The question is a very relevant one since Ontario, as one of the lead provinces, is making a good deal of headway into film production and co-production, and indeed we have several very good arrangements with the province of Quebec.

I spoke with Marcel Masse last Friday on the whole question of Canada's response to the European Community, and was given to understand that he is making headway and will let me know the results of any representations, should they break. I believe he will do that.

Mr Daigeler: I hope the minister will keep us informed on the progress of these kinds of discussions. In a more general vein, could she inform the House whether there are in fact considerable dealings with European countries with regard to television productions, or is our television and film industry directed mostly towards the United States?

Hon Ms Oddie Munro: So far, we in Ontario are making a good deal of headway with the European countries and have in place a number of co-productions. Certainly, through our own agency, the Ontario Film Development Corp, we are encouraging that kind of ultimate process.

We also have arrangements with America but find, as do many other countries that are trying to establish a cultural product, that the sheer mass of the market and the control by the American film and movie producers just simply places us in a noncompetitive situation.

We therefore were dismayed, as were many of the other smaller countries, at the influence the American movie and film producers have. However, we were also dismayed, I guess at the analysis of the recommendation put forward by the European film producers' community and are

hoping Mr Masse will be able to make our case known. Indeed, we believed we were on a very good baseline with European countries and that the co-productions we had embarked on in the past would continue in the future.

CONTAMINATED FUEL

Mrs Grier: Somewhere in the almost impenetrable reply of the Minister of the Environment to questions some time ago, I think he said he had no evidence of polychlorinated biphenyls in fuel that was being imported into this province.

If that is the case, it means one of two things. It means that for the last four days a lot of newspapers have been writing incorrect stories and a lot of people have been talking about something that had no basis in fact, and I assume the minister is going to take action; or it means this ministry is so incompetent it does not have a clue what is coming across the border in the way of contaminated fuel or what it contains.

The Speaker: The question?

Mrs Grier: Is the health of this province at risk? Can the minister tell us yes or no?

1450

Hon Mr Bradley: The choices that she has provided are not ones wherein I would necessarily agree with her contentions. As I indicated to the leader of the third party, in any tests that I have seen so far, we have not detected in the fuels either solvents or PCBs when people blend fuel and waste. I think that is what those people have been dwelling on.

Are there indications that these allegations which have been made are true? We have heard these allegations. We have investigated, based on these allegations. To this point in time, the results we have indicate no detection of that. That is not to say that we will not in the future; further results will perhaps show some. But to this point in time it does not. When it does, I will be happy to see that a prosecution takes place and that, in fact, there is confirmation of allegations.

Mrs Grier: I wonder why the minister did not reassure the people of this province some days ago that there was, in fact, no risk to public health if he is saying it is only allegations and we have no proof. The minister knew that contaminated oil was being illegally imported into this province; he spent two days talking about kingpins and organized crime and the investigation he was doing.

The Speaker: You have a question, I hope.

Mrs Grier: I have a question for the minister. Does the minister feel that there is any contami-

nated oil in this province being imported illegally; and if so what has he done about it?

Hon Mr Bradley: Of course, as I have said consistently, I believe we should investigate all of the allegations which have been made. That is precisely what we are doing: investigating the allegations.

I indicated to the leader of the third party, as I did to the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore in my response to her and in my response to him, that we have not found in our results so far any detectable PCBs or solvents. This does not mean that these products are not coming in. There has been a major newspaper series that has been on in the last four days which has contained allegations about this, in addition to other information that is out there. That is precisely what we have been investigating.

When we find these results, if we find these results, we will certainly bring them to the attention of the public by prosecuting these people. That is what we have to do. That is what we are investigating for. We cannot simply go on the basis of rumours that are out there or compose some kind of blacklist saying you should not buy from this company or that company based on rumours that are out there. Maybe the rumours are true, and that is what we are trying to determine.

Mr Brandt: My question is to the Minister of the Environment. The Federal Bureau of Investigation does not think they are rumours. Obviously the Provincial Auditor—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. It would be much easier to hear the questions and responses if one person talked at one time.

The member has a question, and to which minister?

Mr Brandt: The Minister of the Environment. I just want to remind the minister that the FBI and certain other agencies he is aware of do not think these are rumours. The Provincial Auditor has indicated up to \$100 million in tax revenue is being lost to Ontario as a result of illegal shipments that may in fact be contaminated. It is serious enough that the minister's federal colleague Sheila Copps has already, on this self-same matter, called for the resignation of a minister of the crown in the House of Commons.

How long was the minister prepared to wait before he acted, recognizing that it takes about six months before his ministry can lay charges? Based on the current timetable, it takes six to eight months before his ministry can even check

out samples. How long is the minister prepared to wait before he will bring the evidence before the people of Ontario?

Hon Mr Bradley: The first point I would make is, I ask the member, "Has the FBI laid charges as a result of the exchange of information?" There are a lot of exchanges of information that take place between international agencies, provincial agencies and state agencies. To my knowledge, the FBI has not laid charges based on the allegations which have been made.

We were happy to co-operate with them as a ministry, I am told, at that time. We would be happy to co-operate with them in the future. In terms of our border exercise, we had excellent co-operation from New York state, for instance, from its Department of Environmental Conservation.

This is a team effort. This is something everybody has to be involved in, and we have tried to do that. We have tried to work with others. We have tried to protect the people of this province. That is what our role is, and we will continue to exercise that role.

Mr Brandt: Had the story not broken in the Globe and Mail a few days ago, we would still not have any knowledge whatever about the potential hazards associated with these contaminated shipments of blended fuel coming in from the United States.

I ask the minister once again, in light of the earlier Hansard comments that I read into the record, made by his leader indicating that the Minister of the Environment of the day back in 1983–4 May if the minister is looking it up—

Hon Mr Bradley: And 3 May.

Mr Brandt: The minister should take a look at 4 May too. It is a good date.

What the leader of the minister's party said at that time is that he has a very direct responsibility and obligation in the first instance to protect the health and safety of the people of this province, prior to having all of the information at his disposal, prior to laying charges, prior to taking all of the actions he is talking about now.

The Speaker: Question?

Mr Brandt: Why is it different when the minister is in government from when he was in opposition?

Hon Mr Bradley: I say to the leader of the third party that we have in fact exercised our responsibilities. We have conducted interviews through the investigations and enforcement branch of this province. We have taken samples. Any of the samples that we have, as I have

indicated to the member and his colleague the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, have shown in fact no solvents and no PCBs.

If we find those, I will be pleased to see our investigations and enforcement branch move forward with the prosecution, and certainly that will be a very public incident, that is our responsibility. My responsibility is to protect the people of this province, and I believe I have protected them by having the investigations and enforcement branch do a thorough investigation so that we can get at the people who are responsible for this and close down those who are the criminal element, if indeed that is what they are, in Ontario or beyond our borders, who are involved in tainted fuels.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I would remind all members that there have been occasions when members have become overly excited and said things they are sorry for. I would ask all members to—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

1500

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Mr Tatham: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. He released the county consultation report several weeks ago, and I wonder what action has been taken by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs since that time.

Hon Mr Eakins: As members know, the report was recently released to the wardens of the counties and made public. I want to say I am quite encouraged by the positive initial reaction to that report. I have asked them to review the document and report their comments to me by 14 July. I will then review the submissions and look for areas of consensus.

Since the release, a number of counties have indicated their desire to review not only their structure but their administration, and I look forward to meeting with them to assist in that regard.

Mr Tatham: What happens after the reply back to the minister?

Hon Mr Eakins: Following the receipt of the submission, assessing the consensus and further consultation, I would like to move to recommend changes which are necessary to strengthen our county form of government. I feel it is important that these changes are known well in advance, at the beginning of 1991, so that any changes can take effect for the 1991 municipal elections.

CONTAMINATED FUEL

Mr Reville: I want to go back to the Minister of the Environment, because it is my job to be concerned about the public health of people as well.

The minister has talked about this team effort that he believes is necessary to deal with these allegations. We know that the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations, the Ministry of Revenue and the Ministry of the Solicitor General have all been involved in this investigation.

What is concerning me is, if the minister thought that these allegations had enough merit to them to launch an investigation of this sort, will he advise the House now whether or not he sought advice, in terms of the risk to people's health, from the medical officer of health for Ontario?

Hon Mr Bradley: Our investigations and enforcement branch is there to determine, in an investigative sense, who might be responsible for any of the allegations that come forward, whether to do with this or any other subject. They are the ones who actually conduct these tests; they are the ones who do the investigation to determine whether the allegations are true or not.

What I indicated to some of the member's colleagues is that until such time as we are able to confirm any of the allegations, we are not in a position to take any of the kinds of action the member is contemplating.

Mr Reville: That answer is not satisfactory. If a home owner has in an oil tank in the basement, a load of oil that is contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls and on cold evenings turns on his furnace and there is a blockage in the flue, that house will be full of PCB fumes, dioxins and furans. The medical officer of health of Ontario would have told the minister that.

I cannot believe that the minister has not consulted with the medical officer of health to hear his advice as to the measures he should be taking to protect the people in this province who this weekend may be starting up their garden tractors, who may be turning on their furnaces—

The Speaker: Question.

Mr Reville: —who may be pumping gas at a cut-rate gas station—

The Speaker: You have a question?

Mr Reville: —and getting PCB-contaminated fuel on their skins. Those are real, legitimate public health hazards. Has the minister in fact talked to the Minister of Health (Mrs Caplan) or

the medical officer of health about these very real risks?

Hon Mr Bradley: I say to the member for Riverdale that unless we had a list of guilty companies, what general action would we be able to take in this regard? The member has suggested that, based on allegations and rumours, some kind of general warning should go out there. How would the people know which particular companies would be responsible unless we have done the investigation to determine which companies might be responsible or what violations there might be?

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Stomont, Dundas and Glengarry is waiting patiently. The member for Riverdale was allowed to ask a question.

Interjections.

The Speaker: We will just wait.

Mr Villeneuve: In my riding, farmers are firing up their tractors, their 95 per cent plus all-diesel tractors. Heating oil is used by the vast majority of the constituents in my riding to heat their homes and other buildings. The possibility is that some of these constituents of mine, and indeed the Ontario public, are unknowingly using a potentially very dangerous product to run their tractors and to heat their homes. Why has the minister not advised them sooner of the very real possibility that faces them now?

Hon Mr Bradley: Unless someone could provide a particular list of companies that might be involved in this business as a result of the investigations that take place, then one cannot advise what particular product might be used or what might not be used. If we had that particular list, we would be able to do so.

The member has a genuine concern, and I understand it, but we do not have a list of those companies. That is why what we have to do is make sure we gather sufficient evidence to prove that in fact a company is in violation. That is what we try to do.

Mr Villeneuve: I was listening to a radio broadcast from Quebec. They have had that problem, at least they perceive they have had it, for quite a number of years, and I am quite sure it has existed in eastern Ontario for probably the same amount of time.

Has his ministry not been looking into these possible illegal entries at all ports of entry along the St Lawrence River, where many carriers cross? Have his people not been looking at this recently?

Hon Mr Bradley: I recognize that the federal government has some jurisdiction in terms of the international transportation that the member makes reference to. I want to tell him that our particular investigation has been extremely extensive.

It would be very nice to be able to provide the member with a list of people who are convicted of this, if in fact this can be substantiated, because I do not believe the member is doing anything other than directing a sincere request in this regard, but we cannot simply sound the siren and say you that cannot burn any fuel any more in this province or in some other provinces based on the information we have at the present time.

I say to the member that when I have that kind of information and it can be substantiated, we will present that immediately.

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT

Mr Mackenzie: On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: With respect to my question on Bill 208, I am sorry to have to tell the members of the House that yet another paperworker is dead today as a result of an industrial accident. That is the fourth in less than two or three weeks in Ontario. Guy Duchesne, who worked in the Smooth Rock Falls operation, died in hospital as a result of an accident yesterday.

1510

PETITIONS

NATUROPATHY

Mr Owen: I have two petitions to file. The first is:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas it is my constitutional right to have available and to choose the health care system of my preference;

"And whereas naturopathy has had self-governing status in Ontario for more than 42 years;

"We petition the Ontario Legislature to call on the government to introduce legislation that would guarantee naturopaths the right to practise their art and science to the fullest without prejudice or harassment."

It has been signed by myself for submission purposes and it has been signed by 89 residents of my riding.

TOBACCO TAXES

Mr Owen: The second petition is addressed to the government of Ontario and the Lieutenant

Governor of Ontario, headed "Hold the Line on Tobacco Taxes":

"Cigarette taxes have increased 300 per cent over eight years. Ontario imposes the highest tax on fine-cut tobacco in Canada. We, the undersigned, taxpayers aged 18 years and over, call upon the government of Ontario to maintain tobacco taxes at their present level."

This petition is signed by 1,893 signatures.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Reycraft: I have a petition:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"I, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"I urge Premier Peterson to keep the promise he made during the election when he said he had a 'very specific plan to lower insurance rates.'"

It is signed by one other person from the riding of Oakwood, and I have affixed my signature.

SCHOOL OPENING AND CLOSING EXERCISES

Mr Reycraft: The second petition I have is signed by 62 individuals from Frankford, Ontario:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas we, the greatest majority of taxpayers in Hastings county, have our roots as United Empire Loyalists; and

"Whereas we believe the amendment to regulation 262 relating to 'the collective recitation' of the Lord's Prayer in opening or closing exercises in the public schools deprives many Ontario citizens of an established freedom; and

"Whereas the Parliament of Ontario has given the municipalities the right to decide on Sunday openings,

"We therefore pray that a new regulation would be passed that would give the freedom of choice to the individual Ontario county school boards to establish their own program which would more accurately reflect the religious beliefs of the community and which could include the Lord's Prayer or Christian prayers instead of multicultural prayers, thus recognizing our individual religious freedom denied by the compulsory use of multicultural prayers."

It is, as I said, signed by 62 other individuals, and I have affixed my signature.

TOBACCO TAXES

Mr Cureatz: I have a petition:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the government of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Cigarette taxes have increased 300 per cent over eight years. Ontario imposes the highest tax on fine-cut tobacco in Canada. We, the undersigned, taxpayers aged 18 years and over, call upon the government of Ontario to maintain tobacco taxes at their present level."

It is signed by 308 fine constituents in the great riding of Durham East, and I have affixed my name.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr Kozyra: I have a petition in support of the Thunder Bay and District Injured Workers Support Group, and it reads as follows:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario, and we demand that Bill 162 be withdrawn."

Mr Mackenzie: I have a petition from the Simcoe County Injured Workers Association:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We urge the Liberal government not to proceed with Bill 162, an Act to amend the Workers' Compensation Act,

"Because Bill 162 contains the most significant changes to the Ontario system of workers' compensation contemplated for many years, and yet the Minister of Labour, as reported in the media, wants the bill passed and implemented—in other words, without an adequate process;

"Because Bill 162 represents an attack on injured workers and their families and all of those people who have fought over the years to achieve fairness and justice for injured workers and their families; and

"Because Bill 162 will eliminate the current lifetime pension for lifetime disability and replace it with a dual award system combining a lump sum and actual wage loss award benefits that has been rejected by injured workers, their advocacy groups, community legal workers and lawyers working on their behalf and by the trade union movement since it was first proposed for implementation in Ontario by the 1980 Weiler report and the Conservative government's 1981 white paper; and

"Because Bill 162 virtually ignores the devastating critique and recommendations of the

Majesky-Minna task force report on vocational rehabilitation, that was submitted to the Minister of Labour and suppressed by the Liberal government until April 1988; and

"Because Bill 162 gives legislative form to the unacceptable and reactionary policy of restricting access to supplement awards announced by the Workers' Compensation Board in 1987; and

"Because Bill 162 restricts an injured worker's right to appeal decisions within the adjudication process and elsewhere, notably the percentage 'impairment rating' and reinstatement; and

"Because throughout Bill 162, injured workers are made subject to increased discretionary power at the hands of Workers' Compensation Board functionaries, and made subject to ever more intrusive, invasive and demeaning assaults on their dignity, their privacy and their right to fair and just treatment."

It is signed by 10 workers from the Simcoe area. I have affixed my name to it and agree with it.

Miss Martel: I have a petition addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We urge the Liberal government not to proceed with Bill 162, An Act to amend the Workers' Compensation Act;

"Because Bill 162 contains the most significant changes to the Ontario system of workers' compensation contemplated for many years, and yet the Minister of Labour, as reported in the media, wants the bill passed and implemented by the end of 1988—in other words, without an adequate process for public consultation, debate and discussion; and

"Because Bill 162 represents an attack on injured workers and their families and all of those people who have fought over the years to achieve fairness and justice for injured workers and their families; and

"Because Bill 162 will eliminate the current lifetime pension for lifetime disability and replace it with a dual award system combining a lump sum and actual wage loss award benefits that has been rejected by injured workers, their advocacy groups, community legal workers and lawyers working on their behalf and by the trade union movement since it was first proposed for implementation in Ontario by the 1980 Weiler report and the Conservative government's 1981 white paper; and

"Because Bill 162 virtually ignores the devastating critique and recommendations of the Majesky-Minna task force report on vocational rehabilitation, that was submitted to the Minister of Labour and suppressed by the Liberal government until April 1988; and

"Because Bill 162 gives legislative form to the unacceptable and reactionary policy of restricting access to supplement awards announced by the Workers' Compensation Board in 1987; and

"Because Bill 162 restricts an injured worker's right to appeal decisions within the adjudication process and elsewhere, notably the percentage 'impairment rating' and reinstatement; and

"Because throughout Bill 162, injured workers are made subject to increased discretionary power at the hands of Workers' Compensation Board, and made subject to ever more intrusive, invasive and demeaning assaults on their dignity, their privacy and their right to fair and just treatment."

This is signed by seven members of the Simcoe County Injured Workers' Association. I have affixed my signature to it and I agree with them entirely.

Mr Kormos: I have a petition from the Simcoe County Injured Workers' Association addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We urge the Liberal government not to proceed with Bill 162;

"Because Bill 162 contains the most significant changes to the Ontario system of workers' compensation contemplated for many years, and yet the Minister of Labour, as reported in the media, wants the bill passed and implemented by the end of 1988—in other words, without an adequate process for public consultation, debate and discussion; and

"Because Bill 162 represents an attack on injured workers and their families and all of those people who have fought over the years to achieve fairness and justice for injured workers and their families; and

"Because Bill 162 will eliminate the current lifetime pension for lifetime disability and replace it with a dual award system combining a lump sum and actual wage loss award benefits that has been rejected by injured workers, their advocacy groups, community legal workers and lawyers working on their behalf and by the trade union movement since it was first proposed for implementation in Ontario by the 1980 Weiler

report and the Conservative government's 1981 white paper; and

"Because Bill 162 virtually ignores the devastating critique and recommendations of the Majesky-Minna task force report on vocational rehabilitation, that was submitted to the Minister of Labour and suppressed by the Liberal government until April 1988; and

"Because Bill 162 gives legislative form to the unacceptable and reactionary policy of restricting access to supplementation awards announced by the Workers' Compensation Board in 1987; and

"Because Bill 162 restricts an injured worker's right to appeal decisions within the adjudication process and elsewhere, notably the percentage 'impairment rating' and reinstatement; and

"Because throughout Bill 162, injured workers are made subject to increased discretionary power at the hands of Workers' Compensation Board functionaries, and made subject to ever more intrusive, invasive and demeaning assaults on their dignity, their privacy and their right to fair and just treatment."

That is signed by 10 members of the Simcoe County Injured Workers Association, and of course by myself.

1520

WATER RESOURCES

Mr McGuigan: I have a petition to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. I will not read it because it is rather long, but it has additional names to the petition I presented last week. I respectfully submit it, and I have signed it. It is regarding irrigation waters and lands in southwestern Ontario.

TABLING OF PETITIONS

The Speaker: Just before I call the next order I might remind members and suggest that they might all read standing order 31 regarding the presenting of petitions. I think members will find in there that it is their duty to present the material allegations from their constituents and people across Ontario. However, we do not necessarily need all the reasons why. I think I have tried to explain that in the past, and I just draw standing order 31 to the attention of the members.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Runciman: Earlier today a press release was circulated in the gallery offering a critique of a bill to be introduced later on this afternoon. That was a totally inappropriate thing to occur. It was done by a member of my staff, and I simply

wanted to put on the record my apologies to the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr Elston) for that occurring. He has been most co-operative in terms of dealing with me as a critic for my party, and I feel quite badly about it. I wanted to put my feelings on the record.

MOTION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon Mr Conway moved that Mr Villeneuve and Mr Runciman and that Mr Pope and Mr McLean exchange places respectively in the order of precedence for private members' public business.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE RATES CONTROL ACT, 1989

Hon Mr Elston moved first reading of Bill 10, An Act to Control Automobile Insurance Rates.

Motion agreed to.

Hon Mr Elston: The introduction of this bill will accomplish what I had announced on 17 April, namely that we were capping the automobile insurance rate increases at 7.6 per cent. There is a framework included in the bill which will allow that to take place. We have done this so that we can have a period of time in which we can make a decision with respect to product reform in automobile insurance in Ontario.

With respect to the bill, I hope we can move the bill quickly through the House so that we can ensure that the rates are, in fact, capped for 1 June 1989.

CHANGE OF NAME AMENDMENT ACT, 1989

LOI DE 1989 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LE CHANGEMENT DE NOM

Mr Fleet moved first reading of Bill 11, An Act to amend the Change of Name Act, 1986.

M. Fleet propose la première lecture du projet de loi 11, Loi portant modification de la Loi de 1986 sur le changement de nom.

Motion agreed to.

La motion est adoptée.

Mr Fleet: The Change of Name Act continues to insult and demean women. The act forces a woman who changes her name at the time of marriage to also change her original name on her birth certificate. This infers a woman loses her identity as if never born with her original name. It is completely unnecessary and should be elimi-

nated. The government's response to show both the married and original names on birth certificates is better than before, but inadequate. As I proposed last June in Bill 164, and repeat again, let's amend the bill.

GOWGANDA TOWN PLOT LAND ACT, 1989

Mr Fleet moved first reading of Bill Pr5, An Act respecting Certain Land in the Town Plot of Gowganda in the District of Timiskaming.

Motion agreed to.

VILLAGE OF KILLALOE, 1989

Mr Reycraft moved first reading of Bill Pr22, An Act to continue The Corporation of the Village of Killaloe Station under the name of The Corporation of the Village of Killaloe.

Motion agreed to.

Mr Harris: I think I may need unanimous consent to move a motion put forward by my leader, who is occupied outside these chambers.

Agreed to.

MOTION TO SET ASIDE ORDINARY BUSINESS

Mr Harris moved, on behalf of Mr Brandt, pursuant to standing order 37(a), that the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, that being the crisis facing Ontario citizens as a result of the Minister of the Environment's failure to fulfil his duties and responsibilities as a minister of the crown as defined by legislative act in the province of Ontario.

The Speaker: I must inform the House that I received this notice at 3:15 pm on 10 May, which was according to section 37(a) of the standing orders, so I find this motion in order and I will allow representatives from each party to speak for up to five minutes on the reasons why this matter shall be debated.

1530

Mr Harris: Subsection 11(1) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act states, under the section Obligation to disclose:

"Despite any other provisions of this act, a head shall, as soon as practicable, disclose any record to the public or persons affected if the head has reasonable and probable grounds to believe that it is in the public interest to do so and that the record reveals a grave environmental, health or safety hazard to the public."

That indeed is the obligation of every minister of the crown. That indeed is the obligation under

the freedom-of-information act. Aside from whatever other legal obligation may or may not be there, aside from whatever moral obligation, that is the obligation of the Minister of the Environment under subsection 11(1) of the freedom-of-information act.

I suggest that is an obligation the instant that minister has knowledge that there are "reasonable and probable grounds to believe"—not proof, not knowledge to the extent that he can hold a press conference in New York and bring down the entire Mafia and bring these kinkpins to justice—but "reasonable and probable grounds to believe." That obligation is not if he is requested; it is if he has that knowledge he must disclose that knowledge without a request. Indeed, it is the public's right to know.

I suggest that this minister had that knowledge, that this minister did not disclose that knowledge and that this has caused a threat to the health and the safety of Ontario citizens. I further suggest that were I such a minister, under those circumstances I would have to think very long and hard about whether I should continue on in my responsibilities in this chamber.

To put into perspective the problem that we are talking about, when two Chilean grapes were found tainted with cyanide in the United States, Canada immediately cut off all imports from that country—immediately. Yet the Ontario Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley), it now appears by his own admission, knew for months; he had more, I would suggest, if we look at the rhetoric, than reasonable and probable grounds to believe that Ontarians had been tanking up with deadly fuel cocktails which increased the public's risk of exposure to toxic emissions, including furans, including dioxins. Yet he did not bother to warn that public; he did not bother to put the safety of the health of the people of Ontario first.

I suggest further, as I heard the minister responding today, that his first priority, it appears to me, is to catch the criminal and to have the headline that, "I did all this and I caught the criminal." His first priority is not the health of Ontarians.

I suggest that is wrong. I suggest that if you, Mr Speaker, responsible for this building, knew or had very good reason, had more than probable grounds to know that a bomb was in this building, you would not wait to clear this building until you found out who planted it. Surely you would put the safety of people first while you went on with your investigation to find out who was responsible.

I suggest that this minister did not do that, that it is his obligation under the freedom-of-information act, subsection 11(1), to do that, and that this minister has not lived up to his responsibilities.

Mrs Grier: I am pleased to support the resolution that is before the House at this time, because I think if there was a need yesterday to discuss this issue, that need is even greater today, because today we have the minister saying all that has been said over the past four days really did not amount to very much, because he had no evidence there was any contamination.

One wonders why we did not hear that on Monday; why we heard him saying he is going after the kingpins; why his executive assistant said, on May 10, that for a decade Ministry of Environment investigators have suspected toxic waste was being mixed with waste crankcase oil from the United States; why the minister said since last fall he has been investigating the waste; why he said, in response to all our questions yesterday, "I am investigating." If those investigations have shown nothing, why did he not tell us? Much more important, why did he not move to protect the health of the people of this province, as he has the responsibility and the jurisdiction to do?

My colleague has mentioned freedom-of-information legislation. I would like to remind the members about the Environmental Protection Act, which says that when the director, upon reasonable and probable grounds, is of the opinion that a source of contaminant is discharging into the natural environment any contaminant that constitutes an immediate danger to human life, the health of any persons or their property, the director may issue a stop-work order.

A further section says that a police officer or a provincial officer may seize the permit and the number plates of a vehicle, where he is of the opinion, upon reasonable and probable grounds, the vehicle was used or is being used in the commission of an offence in respect of hauled liquid industrial waste or hazardous waste.

The minister has failed to exercise his responsibility under either of those sections of the act, and yet a year ago this minister said: "I want to stop the illegal flow of toxic wastes into and out of Ontario. The health of our citizens must be protected from the illegal handling of toxic chemicals."

What the minister should have done, as soon as he became aware of even the likelihood of large amounts of contaminated fuel being for sale in this province, was to run immediate and

extensive tests and to tell us the results of those tests. He should have informed people that there was the possibility, at their retail outlets, they could be buying this kind of fuel.

He ought to have informed people what to watch for, how to know if perhaps the fuel or the oil they were buying was contaminated. He should have explained to them that the fumes may be different. He should have alerted them to the need to perhaps examine what they were buying, to be conscious of the fact that if there were any emissions from their furnaces, they ought to take some particular care, because of the likelihood that there was contaminated oil.

He should have ensured that particularly greenhouses, particularly furnaces involving the production of food, particularly places of education or child care centres should have been alerted to the possibility. If those places which are most likely to look for cut-rate oil because of the restrictions in their funding that have been imposed by various levels of government had any reason to suspect there was anything wrong with their heating installations, they ought to have looked for it and they ought not to have been burning that particular oil because we have a danger to health. We know polychlorinated biphenyls, furans and dioxins are a danger to health and we know when they are improperly burned, they are a danger to health.

At the very least, this minister should have informed the federal Minister of the Environment immediately, so the customs and excise division of the Department of National Revenue and Environment Canada could become fully involved in matters underneath their jurisdiction. He should have informed the medical officers of health and he should have sought the advice of the chief medical officer in this province. He indicated today that he had not done that.

It is important that the people of this province know finally whether or not there is any risk. If the minister says he has no evidence, he has ceased all investigation and there is no risk, let him say so. He did not say that. He said, "I have no evidence, but I'm investigating and I can't tell you what I'm investigating until I find the kingpins." That is not good enough, and we deserve more from our Minister of the Environment.

1540

Hon Mr Conway: I have only to say, let this debate begin.

The Speaker: Three members have spoken. Interjections.

The Speaker: I remind all members that they may speak for up to 10 minutes. Speakers may continue until we have run out of speakers or the clock strikes six. The first speaker will be the member for Leeds-Grenville.

MINISTER'S DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Mr Runciman: It is a pleasure to participate in this very important debate. I think members of the Legislature have been made aware over the past two days just how important those of us in the two opposition parties, at least, consider this issue. Certainly we believe, from the reaction in the media and the calls that are coming into our offices, that our concern is shared by many members of the public.

Our House leader was talking earlier in his efforts to convince the House, which I am pleased he was able to do, with respect to whether or not we should have this debate. He drew an analogy between what happened with respect to the discovery of cyanide on two grapes imported from Chile into the United States and the reaction that took place on that occasion.

Someone opposite shouted, "Ridiculous reaction." I may share that observation that it was certainly, in many respects, an overreaction to what was, in many minds, a rather modest cause for alarm. Perhaps part of that may have been because of the source of the grape. I am not sure. There always seems to be an overzealous reaction to anything emanating from Chile or South Africa, so that may have been part of the rationale behind that reaction. I do not know.

But when we take a look at that reaction and take a look at the response of the Minister of the Environment (Mr Bradley) with respect to this particular concern, I think there is a good case to be made that the minister's response in this particular situation was not adequate and was not appropriate. I am sure that upon reflection, although we are not going to hear it here this afternoon, in his own thoughts and in the privacy of his apartment with friends and colleagues, he might admit that perhaps this should have been handled somewhat differently than it has been up to this point.

We talk about the danger presented by this particular problem. We do not know how significant it is, I agree. We do not know how widespread this problem is. That is indeed accurate. But again, comparing this to the Chilean grape situation, I want to quote from the article in the *Globe and Mail* with respect to the lacing of fuels with toxic wastes, and some

description about the possible impact and the possible dangers posed by this practice.

"Participants in the scheme said that when wastes were available, fuels were diluted 10 to 15 per cent with whatever wastes were easily disguised in the fuels, usually solvents or waste oils.

"Hazardous waste disposal experts said these fuel cocktails would produce toxic emissions, including furans and dioxins, when burned in truck engines or in industrial boilers.

"PCBs, once widely used as coolants and lubricants, were banned in both Canada and the United States"—and this is a very important aspect of this—"after they were shown to cause brain, nerve, liver and skin disorders in humans and cancer in laboratory animals. Furans and dioxins, produced when PCBs are incompletely burned, are even more dangerous."

I think that is certainly an important ingredient of this discussion and this debate about the response of the minister and the ministry. We are talking about waste products that do indeed, it has been scientifically proven, present very serious and real hazards to human life in a variety of ways.

I think when we reflect upon that, no matter how uncertain we are about the scope of the hazard that may or may not be out there, it is incumbent upon the minister in a situation like that to make the public aware of what may be happening: that there is indeed a problem out there, that he is not aware of the significance of it but that his ministry is conducting a thorough investigation to ensure that if it is occurring in this province, he will, as best he can, make every effort to put an end to this practice.

He obviously made a decision for reasons known best to himself, and perhaps we will never know. There have been charges assessed today and yesterday with respect to the minister's efforts to enhance his public relations situation. We saw him running off to Ottawa and indicating that he was having urgent meetings with the federal Minister of the Environment to bring him up to speed on the problem.

He indicates in this House, on virtually a daily basis, his capabilities to handle every problem that could possibly come before his ministry. He has indicated in fact that he is Mr Superminister of the Environment.

Mr Fleet: And he is a superminister.

Mr Runciman: Certainly I would call him a superminister in terms of patting himself on the back. He must have a couple of tired arms, because the minister is almost continuously

patting himself on the back about the wonderful job he does.

This is an indication of the fact that perhaps public relations came before very valid public safety concerns. When it becomes an argument between public relations and public safety, I think those of us in the opposition parties believe—and I am sure, Mr Speaker, that the vast majority of your constituents and mine would share the view—that public safety should be the top priority, not public relations or who we can or cannot charge and getting up on a platform and indicating to the public: “Look how strong, how tough I am with polluters. I have laid yet another charge.”

At the same time, we can go on for months and months with possibly significant health hazards being posed to the members of the public without this minister making them aware of that possibility. It is a very serious matter indeed and one this minister is not going to be able to walk away from very easily.

I want to talk about this ministry and touch briefly on another aspect of the minister's efforts to portray himself and his ministry as untouchable and the saviours of the environment in this province. In my own riding late last fall, we had a proposal to construct a hazardous waste incinerator. That proposal came as a complete surprise to people in the riding, but the Ministry of the Environment, which had been involved in those discussions for some time, did not provide any advice, assistance or support to the township council in that situation, a very naïve council without the ability or the financial wherewithal to have expertise on staff. They have to rely on the Ministry of the Environment in situations like that, and the ministry did not come through.

What happened? That municipal council was thrown out of office on its ear and we had a citizens' group established to fight the toxic waste incinerator in our area. This minister was approached. He met with groups from that area, he was approached by the new council, he was approached by myself. What kind of an attitude did he take in that situation?

Obviously there were not enough brownie points or headlines to be made. He took the attitude that: “I'm going to sit on my hands on this one. I'm not going to be get involved. Stay on the sidelines and out of the game.” This is a very serious environmental question for a significant part of eastern Ontario and northern New York state. Mr Speaker, I am sure you were made aware of this issue even in your part of eastern Ontario. What happened? Nothing from the

Ministry of the Environment: no assistance, no support.

1550

When we get down to the really significant issues, and this one that we are discussing today is certainly one of those, and other issues of very critical importance to people in this province who have great concerns about where we are going in respect to the environment, this minister has failed and failed miserably.

I will tell members where he has not failed, and that is in projecting the persona of the saviour of the environment. I will give credit where credit is due. He has done a good job in that respect. But I am saying here today that when we talk about fuel being laced with toxic waste and the release into the environment of products that can cause brain, nerve, liver and skin disorders in humans, and it has been proven to be a cancer causer through laboratory experiments, and also that when they are incompletely burned they are even more dangerous than the experiments up to this point have indicated, it has to bother all of us that the minister did not consider that a significant enough situation that he would inform the public, make them aware of the situation and certainly clarify how extensive or nonextensive it was and allay the concerns.

The Deputy Speaker: I have been told there is an agreement to go counterclockwise, the reverse to tradition for rotation. I presume there is unanimous consent for that.

Agreed to.

Mr Pouliot: Unlike the previous distinguished colleague, I take no pleasure in participating in this emergency debate, although I am fully cognizant that it has become a necessity. When I say I take no pleasure, if I may just reminisce a bit, I too read the papers and try to keep au courant of developments in the province, trying to find out what is being pushed, what is high profile and what is not.

Always in my usual manner I like to be positive and believe. We have known for the past four years—or we were told—that the government of Ontario places a very high profile on the environment.

We were also fully cognizant and aware that the present Minister of the Environment, in some circles, had an immaculate record. We were shocked. I think we were disappointed, not because it was a blot on an otherwise immaculate record that would take on even greater proportions, but because of truth and, I should say, or consequence.

The papers report that the minister was aware; the minister knew. The minister was tipped off as far back as a year ago that a potentially deadly blending of an essential commodity was taking place; fuel oil and diesel oil was being mixed with some pollutants, with toxic materials. We are very much aware of the costs of disposing of toxic waste.

The minister knew some months back that this was taking place. The minister was also very much aware of the shortcomings when it comes to regulating the transportation of fuel from the United States to Canada. He knew because the Provincial Auditor told him. He told all of us by way of the Minister of Revenue (Mr Grandmaître). He in fact indicated that the province was being shortchanged to the tune of at least \$4 million in revenues simply because the province had failed in its duties in monitoring compliance.

That is what the Provincial Auditor said. The government of the day acquiesced; it said, "Yes, we shall monitor compliance in the future." It is my understanding that they have recouped some \$4.6 million.

The Minister of the Environment had to make a decision. I can appreciate the impasse. I can appreciate the dilemma. One gets accustomed to the spotlight, the feather in the cap, the responsibility of not jeopardizing—he is the one who is saying this—an investigation. However, if one suspects or knows that one is blending toxic chemicals with fuels, one does not have to be a chemist to know that one will surpass or exceed the tolerance levels, the acceptable levels.

The minister, incidentally, was trying yesterday to save his own political skin in this House by refusing 14 consecutive times to answer the very simple question of his colleagues the representatives of the people of Ontario who asked him, "When did the minister find out?" The opposition wanted to help the minister. They wanted to share and jointly find ways by which the problems could be solved. It was 14 times—and the records will attest to that—that the minister refused to answer that very simple question.

The rationale was that the investigation would be jeopardized, and yet less than 10 minutes later the minister seemed to come to his senses or choose another forum. He went right outside the House and divulged that he had known since January 1989.

The minister likes to talk about partnership and the collective effort of Ontarians and parliamentarians, and yet the suspected health hazard was not shared with the public. If in doubt when it comes to public welfare and public health,

Minister, one does not wait until after the fact and try to lead one's colleagues in a cloak-and-dagger episode of catching, as he has said, the kingpin. No, no, no.

"I, the Minister of the Environment, sincerely believe in the welfare and health of my fellow citizens." He should act first. He should not take chances. He should abide by the provisions that are set forward; they are right there in black and white. He should obey those.

His mandate, his duty, but perhaps just as important, his obligation—he should do what he senses, what his heart, his gut feeling, tells him, what his instinct tells him—his obligation is to stop what is taking place. He should use, for instance, the search and seizure provisions of the Environmental Protection Act. Did the minister do that? No. One runs tests on these fuels at the point of sale. Did the minister do that when he was first informed of the potential hazard? No, he chose not to.

Did the minister inform the public, the retail outlets, that toxic material was on the loose and was being used for daily consumption? No, he did not. Did the minister use the stop-order provision in the act? Did he do that? He chose not to. Again, the minister was not at his post. This is the same minister who takes a great deal of pride in saying, "The government of Ontario is dedicated, more than any other jurisdiction in North America—provincial, state or federal—to protecting the environment," and yet when it comes to what every one of us in the House should do, the minister is not at his post.

1600

We are talking about public health here. It is regrettable, because I was aware of the agenda of the Minister of the Environment. I know how busy he is. Sometimes I am pleased to have coffee with him, and he speaks so sincerely.

Hon Mr Conway: About Terrace Bay and other things?

Mr Pouliot: He does indeed include the many paper companies in the riding of Lake Nipigon, knows inside out the wording of what monitoring compliance on work orders does and follows through. So I share with him a sense of disappointment.

I am not asking for the minister's resignation, as some have done. All I am asking the minister to do is abide by the rules. This is the protection that the public has, and whenever there is potential to affect public health, he should not worry about what his advisers tell him; he should worry about his neighbours, his community, his colleagues and the workers, and he will find the

right answer. Should he fail to do this, he should listen to someone with a social conscience and read the act to make sure, for his own protection and for the protection of people, that this kind of tragedy, a potential calamity if you wish, is never allowed to take place in Ontario.

Hon Mr Scott: It is not often that I have an opportunity to participate in the debate in the House, but I asked our whip if I could have the opportunity to speak today because I think what is happening in this Legislature is important and I would like to express my views about it.

I do so because I understand well the way the Minister of the Environment has responded to this important issue, and I think it would be useful if I could make some comment on it, and I feel an obligation out of loyalty to him and out of admiration for his record to do so.

I have been in this assembly for four years and I understand well that when an opposition party, having read the *Globe and Mail*, gets the bit within its teeth, there is almost nothing to which it will not stoop in order to make the next headline or the headline after that. I understand that well.

We have come to understand—I myself have experienced it—that there will be weekly, if not daily, calls for the resignation of this minister or that minister. Indeed, I think some who will be speaking today have several times called for my resignation. It is rather the thing to do to draw attention to an issue in which the opposition feels it has something to say.

We understand that. We understand the process. We understand the game and the way it is played, and we are prepared to submit to those rules, which of course is why we participate in the debate.

But once that is all understood, it is worth while in a case like this to look at the issue and determine the extent to which there is a real issue as distinguished from the almost daily kind of trumped-up issue that opposition parties—ours included, no doubt, when we were there—have to present in order to get their names in the papers.

Let me just begin by giving members an example from my own experience, because if the Minister of the Environment is guilty of what is alleged against him, I am guilty. In the Ministry of the Attorney General, it is a daily event to receive allegations about criminality. The criminality alleged often involves the commission of a crime of very serious proportions, often involving death.

Our responsibility in my ministry is precisely that of the Ministry of the Environment: to

receive the information and to act promptly and diligently to investigate it to determine if there is evidence that you can put before a court that will justify a conviction.

That is the way process works in a democratic society, and the fact that members of the opposition do not want to be democratic today and want to get their names in the paper is just beside the point.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Scott: The fact of the matter is that if it came to my attention as Attorney General that the honourable member opposite, who is just about to interrupt, had committed a great crime, it would not be my right—indeed, it would be inconsistent with my duty—to announce that to the public to his prejudice, to his disadvantage.

My obligation, on the other hand, would be to take that allegation seriously, to investigate it, to build a case and to present the case so that affirmative action to stop the criminality, if such there was, could be undertaken. That is the way it is done under our process and that of course is precisely the process that the Minister of the Environment has wisely adopted and followed in this case.

There is no suggestion, and there could not be any, that he has misled the House. He has now indicated when the information came to his attention, and he has given the House an account of the steps he has taken to ascertain whether that information is correct. He will in due course, if the information can be substantiated, take action, under environmental legislation or the Criminal Code, designed to terminate the practice. That is the practice; that is the way it has to be done.

It is really amusing today to hear the New Democratic Party members saying that the bald allegation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation should be broadcast across the community. Never before in 20 years have I heard such devotion to the interests of the FBI as has been exhibited by the great civil libertarians in the opposition party today.

The fact is that the Minister of the Environment, in this case, is doing what the statute requires and commands. Now, if at the end of the exercise it should be illustrated that there has been any misconduct in the way he has conducted himself, that is another question, but that is not the question we are dealing with now.

The opposition parties want action before it is proper to take action, because there is no evidence. When that evidence is forthcoming, if it is there, action will occur.

Now, having said that about it, it is worth observing that the allegation made against this Minister of the Environment is not only wrong for the reasons I have given but is totally inconsistent with his political career in this Legislature. There is no minister of the environment in the country, and probably no minister of the environment in North America, who has more aggressively advanced the interests of the citizens of his community than our friend the Minister of the Environment.

The way he has advanced those interests is not by kicking over wheelbarrows, destroying process, barging around, being ineffective. The way he has done it is by listening to concerns, investigating, building a case and acting effectively on that case.

Mr B. Rae: And waiting from January till April before he conducted his first test.

Hon Mr Scott: As I said before the Leader of the Opposition (Mr B. Rae) returned, we are all quite used to the experience that our resignation is demanded by the opposition. We do not ask for their resignations. What would be served by that? They ask for ours, and on a number of occasions, as I say, almost daily, the resignation of one minister or another is sought.

Mr Mackenzie: I have never heard such colossal errors.

Hon Mr Scott: My friend is not even listening.

Mr Mackenzie: The minister was elected here, he says, to play games.

The Acting Speaker (Mr M. C. Ray): Order, please.

Hon Mr Scott: Does the honourable member have a question? I would be glad to respond to it.

Mr Pouliot: Go back to making money.

Mr Fleet: The member doesn't like a good answer anyway.

Hon Mr Scott: No, no, the member prefers to interrupt, and I understand that. That is about the level of his contribution to the debate in the House, although I understand he will be making a speech later.

The reality is that this minister has nothing to answer for on the issue that is presented in this resolution. I say to the House again that I am satisfied that what is alleged against him is totally inconsistent with a record as minister in environmental matters that has been created over four years, when on all the important issues of environmental concern he has outreached the

parties in this House in responding effectively and aggressively to the needs of our people.

I think I speak for all my colleagues in the party. We are delighted and proud to associate ourselves with this minister in asking the House to reject this motion.

The Acting Speaker: I understand we are going counter-rotationally. The next speaker, the member for Mississauga South.

1610

Mrs Marland: Obviously, the significance of this subject which has now necessitated a second motion in this Legislature—I read into the record that I am speaking in support of a motion under the name of the leader of the Progressive Conservative caucus, the member for Sarnia (Mr Brandt), and that motion is “that the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, that being the crisis facing Ontario citizens as a result of the Minister of the Environment’s failure to fulfil his duties and responsibilities as a minister of the crown as defined by legislative act in the province of Ontario.”

It was very interesting a few moments ago to hear the Attorney General (Mr Scott) stand in this House and suggest that the only reason we had an emergency debate on this subject yesterday, and the only reason we are having a second emergency debate on this subject today, is because there happened to be a story in a Toronto newspaper.

Mr Faubert: He’s right on.

Mrs Marland: The Attorney General also went on to say that because of that story, the opposition would take “the bit within its teeth,” to quote his analogy, and run with it. I want to assure the Attorney General and any other misinformed members of the Ontario Liberal government that both opposition parties have far more to do with their responsibilities as elected representatives in this Legislature than chase down a Minister of the Environment, who obviously does not choose to fulfil his obligation to be an advocate for the environment, for the health and safety of the people of Ontario.

When the Attorney General says he knows the rules and understands the games and that he was in opposition, I want to tell members that I am personally insulted. I think every one of us in the Progressive Conservative caucus is insulted, because when the Attorney General stands in defence of his Minister of the Environment and suggests that all we are doing as members of the opposition is playing games—

Mr Faubert: That's right.

Mrs Marland: —then I would like to suggest that there was no greater gamesmanship than what this Legislature faced yesterday in this House when we asked the Minister of the Environment a very simple question 12 times.

Mr Faubert: It was 13.

Mrs Marland: The gamesmanship of this Minister of the Environment was that he chose not to answer the question in this Legislature that was asked 12 times. His game was to go out into the lobby and answer the question in the media scrum. Now, if members want to talk about games, the Attorney General certainly is right on target with the kind of game we saw here yesterday.

While we are talking about games, we should look at the kinds of games we had with the question periods at the beginning of this week. What kinds of conclusions can the members of this opposition party draw when we get totally conflicting answers in question period from two ministers of the crown? We had a Minister of the Environment, on Monday, stand in this House and tell us that the Ontario Provincial Police indeed was investigating this very serious matter.

Mr Faubert: No, he didn't say that at all.

Mrs Marland: Then the following day we had the Solicitor General (Mrs Smith), whose office I understand is responsible for the Ontario Provincial Police, stand in this House and say the Ontario Provincial Police was not involved.

Mr Faubert: They got the names wrong.

Mrs Marland: Mr Speaker, I understand the rules of this House preclude the kind of continual interruption I am presently being targeted with from the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere. The unfortunate thing about having 94 members in a party that is in government is the fact that most of them never have any opportunity to speak other than in interjections. It shows the strength of their ability to speak when their own caucus does not give them their own platforms and their own time to speak. They spend their time with interjections. Personally, I think it is akin to kindergarten.

The real issue the Attorney General referred—
Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: We are on limited-time speeches and I do not like to interrupt, but if the members are going to persist in interrupting I will use some of the time to admonish as well. The member has the floor. She is entitled to speak no matter how much you disbelieve what she may

have to say. That is irrelevant. Let the woman speak.

Mrs Marland: Mr Speaker, I appreciate very much your intervention and I appreciate your fairness.

When the Attorney General talks about what is the real issue, the real issue here is whether or not the Minister of the Environment is fulfilling his obligations to the people of Ontario. The Attorney General said the Minister of the Environment is doing exactly what the statute requires. I do not know to which statute the Attorney General was referring. I do know, however, that there is a statute existing in this province today that requires the Minister of the Environment to release information to the public under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act when that information might reveal something that puts the public at risk.

Mr Haggerty: You can apply for them.

Mrs Marland: To show how little is known by the member who has just interjected, the member for Niagara South (Mr Haggerty), who said that information can be applied for, I would refer that member to the act. Indeed, under the freedom-of-information act we can apply, the public can apply, for information.

However, there is an exception. The exception is that where the public may be at risk, you do not have to apply for that information. It is a requirement of the minister of the crown to release that information without being asked for it. How interesting, when here we have the possibility of the public being at risk, that this minister did not choose to release that information. Not once in four months did he choose that.

Why do members suppose this minister decided to be his own cops and robbers specialist? Is it possibly because he happens to be the king of egos? Is it possibly because he does not understand the freedom-of-information act and does not understand the requirements that he, as a minister of the crown, is under? What is the reason this minister failed the people of Ontario? What is the reason that for the second day we have to discuss something this Minister of the Environment did not do? His failure to fulfil his mandate, which is to advocate for the environment on behalf of those people who rely on him in terms of health and safety in the environment, is a reflection on the entire government.

On this issue, the Liberal government of Ontario has indeed failed. They have failed, as this minister has in a number of other areas during his term of office. It is quite interesting to have the government House leader stand up

yesterday and laud the attributes of the Minister of the Environment. In fact the member for Renfrew North (Mr Conway) said: "I absolutely reject the analysis the Leader of the Opposition has offered with respect to how the Minister of the Environment has met his responsibilities....we believe the Minister of the Environment has acted very, very responsibly in this matter, as he has in all other matters."

I ask the member for Renfrew North, is he satisfied when this Minister of the Environment does not meet a requirement under the freedom-of-information act, and is he satisfied when this minister puts at risk every single person in this province for four months? He does not even have the sense, the sensitivity or the responsibility to report this matter to his federal minister. No, he keeps it completely under wraps. He is going to find out everything about it while everybody is at risk.

The point is that the public should have the choice of knowing. The public should have the choice of leaving, if they so wish, but with the minister's lack of information and of telling the truth of the matter to this House, then everyone is at risk without any choice.

1620

Mr B. Rae: I had not intended to participate in this debate until I heard the comments of the Attorney General. I felt it important to try to put those comments in some perspective, because they are based on a completely erroneous comparison and a completely erroneous reading of the law and a completely erroneous view of what public policy should be.

The Minister of the Environment stated in this House today, though he did not have the courtesy to do so yesterday, that certain information came to him in January.

Mr Speaker, I do not want to—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Could we terminate a private conversation on this side of the House, please? The Leader of the Opposition has the floor.

Mr B. Rae: The minister has admitted he knew in January of certain information. He has not told us what information. He has not told us the nature of that information. He has not told us the source of that information. He has not told us the extent of that information. He has not told us where it came from or exactly what it is.

His comment today in answer to questions was that he did not want to do anything based on rumours. I do not know whether the minister is

saying he only had rumours. I do not know whether he had information given to him by his staff, whether he had a staff memorandum. I do not know whether in fact he has a copy of the report which according to the Financial Post yesterday the Federal Bureau of Investigation claims to have provided to the Minister of the Environment.

We do know that in addition to there being police investigations in the United States—

Interjection.

Mr B. Rae: I will come to the member for Niagara South in a moment.

He has not told us whether it is based on the information that was before the American Congress in 1985, whether it is based on other sources of information or what exactly it is. The minister has not told us because it is not in his style to be frank with the House in terms of what he knows and when he knows it. You have to get it out of him grain by grain, squeak by squeak, and that is the way it has been with this minister. As a result, he has made a fool of himself.

Yesterday he was on Canada AM saying: "I'm going to get the big guys. I'm going to get organized crime." He comes out of a meeting with Lucien Bouchard saying: "We're going to get the big guys. It's going to be a long, hot summer and we're going to nail them to the wall." Today he is saying: "Rumours? allegations? I don't know. You can stick your nose up the tailpipe. It doesn't bother you. It doesn't bother me. It's no big deal." Eliot Ness becomes Inspector Clouseau in the space of 24 hours.

If there is a problem, and he has four ministries that are working on the problem, the minister had the information in January and he did not conduct a test until April. There are no tests until April. Outside the House—again not here, outside—apparently the minister has said, if I am not mistaken, there are 25 tests that were taken and he has the results of 12 tests.

Hon Mr Bradley: I said that in the House. I said that to Ruth and I said that to Andy.

Mr B. Rae: The numbers?

Hon Mr Bradley: No, but I said that in the House.

Mr B. Rae: Did you say the numbers in the House? Did you say how many tests?

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Hon Mr Bradley: I said all the tests we had taken.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr B. Rae: Outside the House you said the number of tests you had taken, and outside the House you said the number of results you had.

The minister is saying he said that in the House and he did not. In response to questions in the House, the minister said there was no positive test result.

Hon Mr Bradley: I answered to both of those people. Be accurate. You can be miserable, but be bloody accurate.

Mr B. Rae: I am being completely accurate. You said there were test results. You did not say how many. Outside you said how many. You did not say that in here. You can show me in Hansard where I am wrong and I will apologize tomorrow.

Hon Mr Bradley: I said any results that we have—

Mr B. Rae: You show me where I am wrong. The minister, unrefuted, had a chance—

The Acting Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition will continue his address to all of us and not this private discussion.

Mr B. Rae: The minister had information in January. No tests were taken according to what he has told us. Again, if I am wrong let him state in the House that he has test results in January. He has test results for February from gas stations. He has test results from industrial fuel sites. He has test results from diesel trucks. If he has those test results for January, February and March, let him come forward and produce those test results. He has not done so. Why? Because he was carrying out his, in quotes, "investigation," and according to the Attorney General he was doing exactly what he should have been doing.

I do not agree with the Attorney General. I think in fact he is flat wrong. I think he is wrong about the law. I do not know whether the Attorney General has read the Environmental Protection Act or not. I do not know whether he has read the Health Protection and Promotion Act or not. I say to the fixation he has, the fixation the Liberals have, with making charges and with criminal convictions, that this sort of Eliot Ness fantasy over there has nothing at all to do with the issue at hand.

The issue at hand is the public health. If a public health inspector goes into a restaurant and finds there is a piece of liver on the kitchen table that is contaminated, he has a responsibility to take steps.

Under subsection 13(2) of the Health Protection and Promotion Act, "A medical officer of health or a public health inspector may make an order under this section where he is of the opinion, upon reasonable and probable grounds, that a health hazard exists." Similarly, the

Environmental Protection Act says, "When the director, upon reasonable and probable grounds, is of the opinion that a source...is...discharging...any contaminant that constitutes...an immediate danger to human life, the health of any persons, or to property, the director may issue a stop order."

The reason I cite these is to say that there is a complete and total difference between the burden of proof with respect to a criminal conviction and the burden of proof with respect to the obligations of a minister when he thinks or believes that there is a potential public health problem.

It is obviously difficult for us because we do not have access to the ministry documents that tell us what the minister knew. I must say, having watched the minister these last three days, that I do not think we will ever find out what the minister knew and when he knew it. I do not think he will ever produce the documents unless we are able through freedom of information or through some kind of leak to get the minister to tell us exactly what he knew back in January.

What I do know is that information was available to the minister, because it was available eventually to the Globe and Mail, that should have led him to prompt the kind of investigation and the kind of survey across the province that would have made a difference to the public health of this province and to the citizens of this province. The time to launch that kind of inquiry and investigation and that kind of testing was not in April, some four months after he had the information, but in January, the very month he had the information.

The minister has said in this House, "I do not want to announce anything because if I announce anything, I might blow the investigation." Let me tell the minister what the effect of his delay has been. The effect of his delay of over three months in conducting any tests into this matter and the effect of his delay in limiting the tests he conducted simply to the border sites was this: Does he not think that when Jock Ferguson started his story and when the criminal investigation started in the United States, the major firms in the United States and the firms in Canada that were conducting this business were warned off what they were doing?

Does he not think that for three or four months after January when the Ferguson story apparently was started and after the minister was informed at roughly the same time, people had three or four months to get their act in order in terms of what they were doing? Of course they did.

The effect of the minister's delay in introducing these tests was to give the perpetrators of this crime a chance to clean up their act. That is exactly what the effect of that delay has been. The minister may stand up and say: "Now, you know, there is no problem. There is no result. There is no difficulty." But I say to him that his delay and the incompetence he has displayed in his handling of this matter are such that it may be very difficult to find a particular problem at a border site, but that does not mean for a moment that the problem does not exist. It simply means that the way in which this investigation has been carried out by the ministry has been such as to make it all the more difficult for public health to be protected.

That, I think, is the story. It is very difficult to deal with this minister. He is a minister who has had a great deal of respect in this House, but in my opinion he has lost it.

1630

Mr McGuigan: I am, I guess, not overjoyed to join in this debate. It would be rather preferable for all concerned had this not happened. I think it speaks to success; there is some measure of success being enjoyed on both sides of the border with efforts to clean up the environment. It is not as easy as it was a number of years ago to take toxic or banned materials and put them in the nearest stream or put them in the nearest landfill where no questions are asked.

The system appears to be working somewhat, not perfectly, but the system is working to the extent that it is now becoming expensive to get rid of these materials. Organized crime moves into any field where money is to be made. I say it speaks somewhat to the success that is being had on both sides of the border that we are today debating this question.

One of the things that has been alleged in interjections and comments is that the minister has been hunting for headlines and that rather than looking after court cases and looking after the Detroit incinerator, he should have been crying "panic" in the streets. I can say that the people in southwestern Ontario who live in the shadow of that incinerator—myself included, my constituents, my children, my grandchildren and hopefully generations to follow—are very appreciative of the efforts that this minister has taken in that regard.

I am not going to bore members with all the courts that we have been in and out of. There is a whole list of them. Nevertheless, the minister has followed this on every occasion and has had his officials present cases to the American courts.

And he is still at it. This minister is the first person who has done that.

I want to go back to an event that I recall when I was in opposition. The minister was then simply the member for St Catharines. I think the former member for Erie, the present member for Niagara South, was with us. We went over to Niagara Falls, New York, to a lake conference. It was on a matter of the environment and pollutants in the lake, etc. We spent the evening over there and came back.

While we were waiting—actually, I think it was at the border when we were waiting—we ran into a number of people from the Ministry of the Environment who also had been attending the same event. We got into a bit of a discussion about the philosophy of how you preserve the environment. They made a very strong case that you did it by gentle persuasion: "Come on in, fellows, and we'll sit down and we'll talk over this gently. Don't cause much trouble. Don't threaten any person's job, but just be nice, good fellows and clean up your act."

I remember the minister giving his philosophy at the time. His philosophy was that we hit the polluter and we hit them hard. It seems to me that when you strip away all of the rhetoric around this debate, you are really talking about what the best method is of dealing with polluters. Do you do it with gentle persuasion or do you hit them, and hit them hard, with fines such as \$500,000 or long stretches in jail? That is the course the minister has followed. I believe, in the long run, it will be the course that will show results, because simply closing this border or checking things at the border for the moment does not mean those criminals and people who are involved in this, where there is a lot of money, are going to stop their efforts.

I spent a fair bit of time at border points, because we used to import and export some products, and I watched the process of examining those trucks. Trucks come over with mixed loads of chemicals and the inspectors take a cursory look at them. There is no way it is possible they could go in there and analyse every package and every barrel of product that is in that truck. It could easily be, if we cut off the fuel as a means of bringing this in, they would simply put the pure product in a barrel, label it with some fictitious name and send it across to a receiver on this side of the border, who then proceeds to dump it in any convenient tank of oil and it goes unsuspected.

If we are going to stop this, we have to get at the people who are doing it. I believe the minister

is taking that course and ultimately, it will result in greater protection for the people of Canada and Ontario.

A lot has been made about the fact that the minister should have created panic in the streets. He should have gone out in January, because some brown envelope, phone call, tipster or whatever had told him there is a possibility some of the fuel is contaminated.

Should the minister have then gone out in the streets and said, in the hospitals that are heated with oil furnaces, "Turn off your furnaces"? It is January. The temperature, in Ontario in January, is pretty damn cold. Should he have done that? Should he have gone to the greenhouse people and said: "Because someone has sent me a note, or because of a whisper, there is a slim possibility a small part of the fuel of Ontario is contaminated. Shut off your greenhouse. Let the stuff freeze"?

To take an extreme example, should he have said to the ambulances—

Mr Sterling: What does Sheila Copps say?

Mr McGuigan: I was not talking about Sheila.

Interjections.

Mr McGuigan: Great lady. She is a lovely lady. I am not going to get into any sort of arguments. She is a lovely person and was a great colleague of mine.

Just to use an extreme example, shall we say to the ambulance drivers, "Don't answer that call for the person who has been the victim of a fire, sickness or whatever, because someone told me there is a slim possibility your tank might have some contamination in it"?

The point I am trying to make, ladies and gentlemen, is we should be a little bit practical and give the minister some kudos for being sensible, for being practical, for being responsible in this situation. He has been—

Mr Charlton: Was he responsible on Monday?

Mr McGuigan: I am not going to answer for the member's quarrel with the minister on how he responds to questions and how questions are answered. He has ample chance to do that with the minister himself. I am simply talking about the philosophy and the system that he has introduced to Ontario. I will tell members it is the best philosophy and the best system that is available to us, given the fact we are dealing with rumourmongers. We are dealing with criminals. We are dealing with highly sensitive matters. To

simply go out on the streets and cry panic, I think, is the wrong thing to do.

Mr D. S. Cooke: What does Sheila Copps say?

Mr McGuigan: The last time I looked around, I thought we were in the Legislature of Ontario. Sheila is very capable, more capable than I, I would suggest, at defending herself and making her statements. I am not responding to Sheila. After all, she might some day be the Prime Minister of this country and I would not want to be on record as contradicting her. I could do that at times, but she might be Prime Minister. She would make a great Prime Minister, as she does make a great representative from her riding of Hamilton East.

1640

Mr Sterling: I think it is important that we turn our thoughts again to this particular issue today. If in fact the placations we have heard put forward by the Minister of the Environment that there is indeed no problem here in Ontario with regard to this whole matter, if we are to buy what I consider a complete reversal of the position of the Minister of the Environment this afternoon from everything else that has gone on this week, then that is fine and dandy, but let's at least learn from this particular situation so the Minister of the Environment will not truck off to Ottawa and raise speculation by having meetings with the federal Minister of the Environment that in fact there is an environmental problem.

He will not appear on Canada AM and make threats against mobsters and crimebusters and environment busters.

Mr J. B. Nixon: Let's take Andy Brandt off Canada AM.

Mr Sterling: I hear the member for York Mills saying "Let's take Mr Brandt off Canada AM." The member for Sarnia would not have been on Canada AM, nor would the member for York South (Mr B. Rae), had the minister not held up the straw of there being a problem with regard to toxic waste here in Ontario. Neither one of them would have been there, and the public would have been spared a waste of the Legislature's time for two days with regard to this particular problem.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Come on. Order.

Mr Sterling: That is what the Minister of the Environment is telling us today: "There is no problem here."

We have a problem with the philosophy of the Minister of the Environment. The previous

speakers talked about the new philosophy of this government. I will tell members what the philosophy of this government is. First and foremost, the Minister of the Environment must prosecute. The second priority is the public, and that is what we are arguing about here in the Legislature today.

We are arguing for the people of Ontario to be protected. We would like the people who are breaking our environmental laws to be prosecuted, but first of all we are concerned with the safety of the people of Ontario. That is our most important priority. That is why the former Minister of the Environment, the member for Sarnia, our leader, takes issue with the Minister of the Environment with regard to his dealing with the prosecution.

Interjection.

Mr Sterling: The people across the floor say it is one and the same. We have an example before us here today which tells us where the priorities of this government are. They are with prosecution first and the public second. They are less concerned about the ill effects that these supposed toxic wastes might have on the people of Ontario than they are in chasing down these criminals, if they are criminals.

Earlier this afternoon I heard the Attorney General talking about the prosecution process in this province, about his ministry and about how things have gone on for years and years with regard to prosecuting people.

Our motion today was brought in order to point out to this government and this minister that times have changed; the laws of our province have changed. It is about time they were changed.

Recently, we passed the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1987. Subsection 11(1), which was passed by this Parliament in its last session, brought forward what I consider one of the most significant sections in all of the freedom-of-information acts in the world. Our Parliament here in Ontario decided that over and above every other freedom-of-information act in the world that we would put upon the shoulders of our ministers an obligation to disclose, even though they had not been requested to disclose a piece of information.

That section was put in there because it was in the bill which I introduced in 1984 before this Legislature; subsection 11(1) is a straight lift out of that particular bill, Bill 80. I argued with the bureaucracy; I argued with the business interests of this province to make certain that any freedom-of-information bill, either during that

period of time or in the future, would contain a section whereby a minister of this crown, if he received evidence that there was an environmental hazard, would be forced to disclose that, even though he did not have a request, because it would be impossible to have a request—

Hon Mr Bradley: You couldn't get that past cabinet, Norm. I was on your side then, and you couldn't get it past your colleagues.

Mr Sterling: The minister asks if I got it past the cabinet. Of course, I got it past the cabinet. It was introduced in this Legislature on 24 May 1984. That particular section was in the act at that particular time and was approved by our cabinet. This is a straight lift out of that particular bill, and the minister knows that.

Mr J. B. Nixon: Show us your evidence.

Mr Sterling: Read Hansard, 24 May 1984.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Sterling: They obviously do not want to give any credit. It is more important to talk about political pacts than it is to go on into the future and tell these ministers their obligations under the law.

Subsection 11(1) reads, as my leader read it earlier today, "Despite any other provision of this act, a head"—and that means a minister under this act—"shall, as soon as practicable, disclose any record to the public or persons affected if the head has reasonable and probable grounds to believe that it is in the public interest to do so and that the record reveals a grave environmental, health or safety hazard to the public."

Therefore, this minister—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. We have a conversation going here. Could you please listen to the member for Carleton?

Mr Sterling: Thank you very much for your intervention, Mr Speaker.

This minister and any other minister of this government—and I do not think that some of the ministers are aware of that obligation—have an obligation even though they have not received a letter from a member of Parliament or a citizen of Ontario. They have an obligation to disclose to the public if they have a reasonable belief that in fact there is information which they should disclose to the public so the public can protect itself from a potential hazard. That is why I told my bureaucrats to put that in the act. It is not in any other act or in any other freedom-of-information act in the world. We have legislation which will, hopefully, protect our public from a

Minister of the Environment who sees information but does not disclose it.

1650

What happens if the minister does not disclose this particular information, and there is damage to some citizen across the province as a result of his holding that information back? It puts the government in legal jeopardy with regard to that particular information. In other words, if someone in the province has suffered over the past three months as a result of PCBs from toxic waste, then he has every right to sue this government for the damages that result therefrom. That may be of little solace to somebody who has in fact been injured over the past few months because of these toxins.

I hope at the very least that this minister will in the future conduct himself in a more responsible manner with regard to the disclosure of information and how he conducts himself as a minister of the crown.

Mr Charlton: I enter this debate again today with some significant degree of unease. I should say that as we get further into this debate, the sense of anger that I feel grows substantially with each day that this debate progresses.

We have heard a number of members during the course of this debate, specifically the member for St George-St David, the Attorney General, earlier this afternoon suggesting to this House that yesterday's and today's questions and debate were an effort on the part of some opposition members—presumably he was referring to both of the opposition parties—to get their names in the press and blow this issue all out of proportion.

I want to suggest that if we follow the process the Attorney General set out for us and weigh the facts of this case that so far have been presented in this House, in fact exactly the opposite is true. Let's just take a moment to run through some of those facts. Unfortunately, we have to run through them in reverse order.

Mr Dietsch: Alleged or real facts?

Mr Charlton: Real facts, according to the Minister of the Environment in his statements in this House today.

After three consecutive days of harangue in the media and in this House—

Mr Dietsch: Two days. He wasn't here on Monday.

Mr Charlton: Three: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. On Monday the harangue was in the media. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday are three days, not two.

After these three days, the Minister of the Environment stood in this House this afternoon and said that, as a result of his learning of this problem in January and of his doing testing of fuels in April, the Ministry of the Environment had been unable to find any substantial evidence—

Hon Mr Bradley: So far.

Mr Charlton:—so far, of contaminated fuels. The purpose of the questions and debate yesterday and today is to look at the question of whether or not the Minister of the Environment had acted reasonably and responsibly in the circumstances.

Some members across the way, and specifically the member for Essex-Kent (Mr McGuigan), suggested that some of us were asking that the minister run through the streets of this province spreading panic. Now let's look at who is spreading the panic. Who was it on Monday who started this whole thing? Was it the Leader of the Opposition, the leader of the third party or the Minister of the Environment?

Who said to the media on Monday of this week, "Officials are tracking 'the big guys' who mixed millions of gallons of toxic chemicals with gas and oil fuels"? The Minister of the Environment said that. Today he stood in his place and said, "We have absolutely no evidence that any of that is happening." But on Monday he started the panic in the streets by saying, "We're after the big guys who used millions of gallons." Those are the words of the Minister of the Environment.

Let's talk and think about responsibility here in this debate. Based on what the Minister of the Environment told us here today, a responsible, reasonable thing for the minister to have said on Monday would have been:

"Yes, I am aware of the problem. I am aware that there are accusations to that effect. My ministry is investigating those accusations. We have tested numbers of gallons of fuel from vehicles coming into this province. To date, we have been unable to find any evidence that the accusations are true. However, it is time the public of Ontario became aware of the possibility of an environmental problem in this province.

"Any citizen of Ontario, any resident of Ontario who has any reason to believe that he may have purchased contaminated fuel because of irregular performance by that fuel or strange odours being created by the burning of that fuel, please contact the Ministry of the Environment so we can follow up and find out whether in fact there is any contamination in that fuel."

That would have been a reasonable and responsible position for the Minister of the Environment to have taken on Monday, not the position that he took, "Officials are tracking the big guys who mixed millions of gallons of toxic chemicals with gas and oil fuels," when he has absolutely no proof of that and he said so here in the House this afternoon.

The Minister of the Environment is the one who started the panic. The questions that were raised here on Tuesday and Wednesday and again today are all questions that flowed out of the minister's statements of Monday and Tuesday. They had no other source.

Hon Mr Bradley: I think the Globe and Mail might have been the source.

Mr Charlton: The Globe and Mail story would have been raised in the context of: "Was the minister aware? Yes." If the minister had not made the statements he made, the Globe and Mail story would have been raised in the context of: "Was the minister aware and what is he doing?"

Hon Mr Bradley: You guys saw how it played well in the federal House on Monday and then you came into it on Tuesday.

Mr Charlton: Yes, by the minister's colleagues. It was the Minister of the Environment of Ontario who misled the people of this province in terms of what the real extent of the problem was and what was really happening in terms of his investigation.

I refer back to a letter which my leader referred to earlier today. There are still a lot of questions that the Minister of the Environment has to answer for in addition to what he has told us here today. But I would just refer to this letter which was sent to the Premier this morning by Jim Conrad, who says in his letter, "Dear David, you know of my strong support for you and the Liberal government."

In the fifth paragraph in this letter, he says: "Jim Bradley is only damaging the reputation of government when he says he has the answers when he doesn't. David, your officials don't have the answers. They are the problem, not the solution."

Hon Mr Bradley: Now read who he says has the answers. The companies, the industries.

Mr Charlton: I do not see where he says that. He says the people of Ontario have the answers. Industry and environmentalists have the expertise that the minister's officials do not have, but he says the people of Ontario have the answers, not industry. The minister should take the time to

read things a little more carefully and present things a little more factually in the House.

The point I am trying to make is that because of the way the Minister of the Environment has behaved this week and the way that he has handled and presented this issue, he has not only created a credibility gap for the Ministry of the Environment, he has created a credibility gap for this government, even among its own supporters.

1700

One of the useful things that might come out of this debate—and we still, to this date, have not got this out of the minister—is what any person in the province should do if he should suspect as a result of all the publicity this week that he has in some fashion purchased contaminated fuel: heating fuel, diesel fuel or gasoline. Nobody anywhere has told people what they should do if they have reasonable cause to suspect the fuel because of the way it is performing or because of strange smells that it creates when it gets burned, how to find out what is going on and whether there is contamination in that fuel.

This government has a responsibility to protect the people of this province, and it is failing that responsibility.

Mr Black: I am pleased to have the opportunity to participate in this debate. We have an issue before this House which is of significance. It is a serious issue, and although there may be cynics who suggest that the issue was raised by members who perhaps did not have the best of intentions, who might have been seeking political gain, I am prepared to accept that they have raised the issue out of genuine concern.

If we are going to look at the issue in the true scope that it deserves, what we must look at, it seems to me, is the record of this Minister of the Environment. He has been in his post for four years. What has he done and what has he accomplished during that period of time? If we are really going to look carefully at that record, it seems to me we must have some kind of benchmark to which to compare the current minister.

We are fortunate in this province in that we have several benchmarks. We have had, in the past 15 years that the Ministry of the Environment has been in operation, a total of about 11 ministers. It is interesting to note that nine or 10 of those people came from the Progressive Conservative Party, nine or 10 ministers of the environment over a 10-year-period. That in itself may speak very clearly to the priorities that the previous government gave to environmental issues.

What kind of record did those nine or 10 ministers of the environment have in this province? We know, for example, what they did on acid rain. My riding is one of the ridings in this province that suffers the most from that particular problem. It is a riding that does not have natural protection and therefore was at serious risk during the time when acid rain fell, and continues to fall, throughout this province.

The previous government did, as I have said, absolutely nothing. Unlike their federal cousins, they did not even have the good grace to send an emissary to sing songs with the American President. They simply sat and did nothing.

What has this government done and what has this minister done? I think the record is very clear. We have had legislation passed. We have had action taken. We have had the four major polluters in this province brought into the position where they are now reducing the emissions which cause that problem.

We can look at the issue of the spills bill. What is the record of the previous ministers of the environment in relation to toxic spills in Ontario? I think it is somewhat ironic, Mr Speaker, and I know that you will agree because I know that you are interested in this topic, that the people who have moved the very motion which we are debating today are those people who probably caused more pollution to the environment of Ontario than any other single government or any other single minister could have done.

The current minister is being criticized for an issue that is perhaps only a few months old, and yet we have been faced with several ministers of the environment who, for several consecutive years, did absolutely nothing to try to protect the environment against the spills of toxic chemicals.

We see the record of this minister in terms of recycling. This morning I attended an event in my own riding, an event sponsored by the Muskoka Recycling Association in which a fourth member was added to that association. Would that have been possible during the days of the earlier ministers of the environment? The answer is very clearly no.

Let's look at the record. When this government came to power in 1985, the previous government had allocated a mere \$750,000 to the recycling programs throughout this province.

Mr Campbell: How much?

Mr Black: My friend the member for Sudbury asks me to repeat that figure: only \$750,000. What is the record today? The current budget has \$7.7 million allocated to recycling.

Perhaps even more important is that that contribution on the part of this government has been responded to by industry. For example, we have the soft drink industry, which is spending considerable amounts of money, \$20 million in additional moneys, to further the cause of recycling in the province. We see a Minister of the Environment who has once again provided the leadership and has brought with that leadership response from industry and from business throughout the province.

I want to tell members that there are probably three premises which underlie this motion which we are debating today, and if we are going to accept the premises, we must debate what they are.

The first premise that has been talked about to a large extent in this House in the last two days is the premise that there has been a significant threat to the health of the people of Ontario. If that position were to be made, one would expect that evidence would have been provided, that documentation would have been brought into this House, that members of this great Legislative Assembly would have been provided with the opportunity to examine at first hand the evidence which had been collected, the data, the records, the documentation.

Do we have such evidence? I ask you, Mr Speaker, have you had the opportunity to examine the evidence brought forth by either one of the opposition parties that there has in fact been a threat to the health of the people of Ontario? The answer to that question is very obviously no. What we have is a series of allegations, unfounded at this point, unproven.

The second premise we are being asked to accept is that somehow this minister has failed to act responsibly, that he has failed to carry out the responsibilities which have been assigned to him. I want to look at that premise for just a minute, if I may.

The opposition parties have suggested several things the minister might have done. Yesterday, I believe the member for Mississauga South (Mrs Marland) suggested that perhaps the minister should have been considering evacuation. I ask you, Mr Speaker, what parts of this great province should he have evacuated? What communities should have been asked to leave their homes? What people should have been asked to move outside of their communities?

No answers are given. Should he have gone to Mississauga and evacuated that community? Should he have said to greater Metropolitan Toronto, "We're going to evacuate you and

move you to Atikokan or to Sudbury"? I think not.

The opposition members have suggested that the minister might have made a public statement. He could have gone on television. He could have said: "We don't know whether there's a problem yet. We don't know whether there's a threat to health. We're not sure, for example, that we face a situation that places people in this province at risk, but just on the very possibility that there might be a problem, I want to make a public statement."

Is that responsibility? Is that what we would expect from a minister of this government? I think perhaps not.

The final premise on which the opposition bases its arguments is that somehow this minister has failed to respond to questions in a manner which pleases its members.

When it comes to that particular accusation, I have some sympathy and some understanding. It may well be that his responses to their questions were not exactly what would have pleased them. I suspect that, like many other ministers in this government and in previous governments in this province, his answers have not always been the kind that would please the opposition. But I ask you, Mr Speaker, is that reason enough to request that a minister leave his post, to suggest that he is not meeting his commitments, that he is not fulfilling his obligations? I think not.

Mr Speaker, I want to share with you and with other members of this House a little anecdote. I attended a social event last night in Metropolitan Toronto. During the course of that evening, I had the opportunity to have a conversation with a person who is not widely known as a supporter of the political party to which I belong. He is in fact—I am sorry to have to say these words—a person who was formerly an employee of ministers of a previous government. In case anyone has forgotten, he then worked for governments of the Progressive Conservative faith.

1710

During our conversation, I said to this man that there was likely to be a motion today in the House that would suggest this minister should resign. He responded in this manner: "I don't believe it. There is no way this minister could have his credibility attacked. He is the last minister of this government who should have to undergo that kind of attack, given his record."

When members of the Progressive Conservative Party take that view, one wonders why the

party would, in this Legislative Assembly, bring such a motion forward.

I cannot help but note that we have in this House very few members of the Progressive Conservative Party at the present time. The third party is conspicuous by its absence. The official opposition is almost conspicuous by its absence. So we have a situation where two parties had this great need for an emergency debate and to waste the time of this Legislature, but have so little interest in the topic that they refuse to attend.

In conclusion, let me say that any considered resignation by this minister would be a loss to this government, would be a loss to the people of this province and would be a loss to future generations that will benefit from his leadership.

Mr Pollock: I am pleased to take part in this emergency debate. There are a few things I want to put on the record.

Of course, this is like the chickens coming home to roost, because after all this Minister of the Environment has been grabbing some splashy headlines over the last four years, and all of a sudden those headlines have turned around on him. They are not so splashy any more.

Some of that has even been brought on by himself because he failed to answer just when he knew about this. The members of the opposition and the third party here kept asking when he knew about it, and he would not answer. We finally, in disgust, walked out. Then eventually he went out and told the press that he knew about it in January. Why could he not answer us? I could not understand that. On top of that, the FBI claims it told him well over a year ago.

That article in the *Globe and Mail*, which states that well over one million litres of toxic waste have been shipped into Ontario, is a major concern to me and I am sure it is to the Minister of the Environment. It is his responsibility to get a handle on this. He said he is going to nail them to the wall. I hope he does, but at the present time it does not look as though that is really going to happen. It is going to get a whitewash or a coverup.

I asked the Minister of the Environment a few days ago about the situation of mine tailings and if he would actually join with the federal government in having a study.

Hon Mr Bradley: We paid for the first study already; we paid 100 per cent.

Mr Pollock: Yes.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Pollock: They have already had a study, but the study came back in a type of code nobody

understands. Therefore, the people in that area want a study. They want to know whether these mine tailings are safe or not.

Once again, we find the Minister of the Environment making a statement like this, that the responsibility for radioactive waste is a responsibility of the federal government. Who said it was radioactive waste? It is mine tailings. He is alarming people all over that area of eastern Ontario. I do not know whether those mine tailings are safe or not, and I just asked for a study.

Apparently, the cost of that study, this Ontario government's cost, would be around \$45,000. That is peanuts in comparison to the overall budget of the Ontario government. So I do not know why they cannot have this particular study and find out just what the problem is there and if these mine tailings are safe or not.

They seem to have the money to buy houses in the Malvern subdivision, and nobody really said that was radioactive waste. There was another situation where the government bought these houses and turned right around and rented them back to individuals. Is that contaminated soil in Malvern safe or not? We do not seem to be able to get a handle on that. You might say it is along the same particular lines as this toxic fuel thing. We do not seem to be getting the answers, and yet we keep trying. We as an opposition should be getting those answers.

Also, the minister was asked at one point in time by a gentleman in eastern Ontario what he was going to do with regard to pulp and paper companies dumping toxic waste into the streams. The minister said he had a plan that he was going to announce in a week's time. In a week's time, the minister announced that he was going to have another study. The minister knows right well that there are toxic chemicals going into those streams, and he should be supplying some assistance to the pulp and paper mills to stop those toxic chemicals going into our streams. That is his responsibility.

Hon Mr Bradley: Taxpayers' money to help the companies.

Mr Pollock: Pardon?

Hon Mr Bradley: Taxpayers' money for the companies.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Pollock: Is the minister interested in the environment or not? The Minister of the Environment seems to think we should not be concerned about toxic waste going into the streams now, let

alone toxic waste going into our fuels. This is a major concern to me.

For instance, here is what some of the ministry people are doing, and it is a little surprising to me. If a person wants to dump sludge on his farm, the Ministry of the Environment people will come out and they will ask, "Is that all right?" But they will turn right around and tell you, "If you do not like it, there is nothing you can do about it." I do not really have any complaints about their dumping sludge on their farms, but with this cat-and-mouse game of coming around and asking you and then turning around and saying, "There is nothing you can do about it," they might just as well stay home as far as I am concerned. Maybe in one way it is only good public relations, but it is really not accomplishing too much.

Those are some of the things I just wanted to put on the record, the concerns about this contaminated soil in Malvern and also the mine tailings. We do not seem to be getting the answers from the Ministry of the Environment. The federal government has said it will put up its money, but this minister will not put up money in that regard. I think we deserve more from this particular Minister of the Environment in regard to this toxic fuel oil and fuel contaminants that are coming into Ontario from the United States.

Those are a few of the things I wanted to put on the record.

Mr Philip: I found it interesting, as matters evolved in the last few days, thinking back to similar scandals that have happened over the last 14 years, but I cannot truthfully, and perhaps the government House leader will help me, think of a single example where there has been such a set of examples of pleonastic oratorical sonorities, without any kind of atoms of truth stemming from the minimal truth, stemming from the cranium or the oesophagus of a cabinet minister, than we have seen stemming from that of this cabinet minister.

After numerous questions in this House, we find out that some time in January the minister knew something was wrong in terms of hazardous waste being transported into Canada. We know the matter was a serious matter because it concerned PCBs and we know PCBs are a matter of life and death. We have dealt with the seriousness of these contaminants in this House on numerous occasions. You do not need a medical degree to know exactly how serious the matter is.

We know that in April the Ministry of the Environment did testing, but we do not know

where. We have not been able to find out what happened between January and April in the Ministry of the Environment and why, if the minister became aware in January, no testing was done until April.

What were the things that were done before? We know that the minister said it was serious and that he found out in January. He did not tell the House that. He told the press under examination in the corridor, but eventually we did find out that he knew something was seriously happening in January and that nothing was done. Nothing, he has informed us, was done until April.

1720

We also do not know exactly what contact, if any, he made with the Solicitor General. I find this of particular concern because on Tuesday the Solicitor General in this House answered she was not aware of the problem. Oh, she was aware of a revenue problem. She was aware of the revenue problem because, of course, it was exposed by the Provincial Auditor. She would have been conducting an investigation into the allegations and the concerns of the Provincial Auditor that millions of dollars may possibly have been lost through a system of possible fraud in terms of the transportation of fuel oils.

The Minister of the Environment would also have been aware that the Ontario Provincial Police and the Solicitor General were concerned about this, because this was a matter that was brought up in the House. He would also, of course, as a competent and reasonable cabinet minister, have been aware of the report of the Provincial Auditor.

Yet at no time is there any evidence, unless of course the Solicitor General has had a lapse of memory—if we can believe the Solicitor General, at no time did the Minister of the Environment go to that Solicitor General and say, “Look, I know you are concerned about possible fraud in terms of revenue, but I have something that is even more serious that may be going on and it is reasonable to assume the same people may be doing the same things.”

Mr Dietsch: You’re using the wrong tack, Ed.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Philip: The Treasurer says I am using the wrong matter. The Treasurer, of course, had some knowledge of it and he did not do anything either.

If we take the royal commission on illegal activities and the environment, the Petroleum Marketers Association of Canada, in a letter to the Premier dated 11 May, says: “The time has

come to set up a royal commission on illegal activities and the environment. The suggested terms of reference are attached. Essentially, the role of this commission would be to define the extent of the problem and to recommend solutions.

“Bob Nixon”—that is the Treasurer—“of whom we have the greatest of respect, was told these problems on several occasions. Last November, I wrote Mr Nixon. I know he read my letter.... I met with....” It goes on to say who they met with.

First of all, we know the Minister of the Environment was aware several months ago. Then several months passed before any tests were done. But now we also know the Treasurer was made aware, and yet somehow on Tuesday the very person who should be most concerned, the chief police officer in this province, says she does not know anything about it.

One must ask what kind of communication goes on in that cabinet when the Treasurer is aware of the problem, the Minister of the Environment is aware of the problem, but nobody thinks it might be a good idea to have the chief police officer in the province, a fellow cabinet minister, look into this problem.

Eventually, the minister does get around to saying, on 9 May, “A surprise border check was set up by the provincial, state and federal authorities, in an attempt to crack down on improper hauling of liquid industrial waste between Canada and the United States.” He does it in a release. Whoopee. He knew months ago. Nothing seems to happen. He does not even tell his colleagues who should be most concerned, and his cabinet, and then suddenly he decides he is going to become Superman and save Ontario by having some surprise border checks.

One must ask, I wonder, what happened if there were contaminants, if there were, as the Minister of the Environment in a rather inflammatory statement on Tuesday would suggest, underworld elements involved, why he would not have gone with his suspicions early when he first obtained his information?

On Tuesday, here is what the Minister of the Environment says: “Officials are tracking the big guys.” The big guys; I assume that is the underworld. I do not know any other big guys; I have a friend who is six foot six, but I assume that is not the big guys he is talking about.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Philip: It certainly is not my colleague the member for Nickel Belt (Mr Laughren). He is big

when you measure him from the shoulders up, but one assumes that the big guys—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Big guy or little guy, only one member gets to speak at the same time around here; one at a time, big or small, according to the standing orders.

Mr Philip: He says, "Officials are tracking the big guys." We assume the big guys are not the cabinet ministers, because he goes on and says he also "cannot rule out organized-crime involvement in the lucrative scam of blending the PCB-contaminated waste chemicals with gas, diesel and industrial fuels."

That was on Tuesday. On Tuesday, the Minister of the Environment, not having even talked to the Solicitor General, was going to go out and become Eliot Ness stopping crime in this province by catching the big guys. He has not talked to the Solicitor General, but he is going to do it.

I hate to tell Superman this, but if there was ever a person who has inflamed the situation it is the Minister of the Environment. It is not the opposition that has said there is organized crime working here. It is the Minister of the Environment who sets aflame the public by saying there may be.

Now today we have Superman who wants to be both Solicitor General and Minister of the Environment, the Eliot Ness against organized crime who suddenly says: "The opposition is being alarmist. How can we lay charges? We've done some tests and we've got no evidence." Where was his evidence on Tuesday when he suggested organized crime was involved?

What we clearly have is a minister who has failed in his responsibility, a minister who possibly wanted to take personal credit for zeroing in on this, who sat on a serious issue of consequence to the health of the public in this province, who did not share the information with the one person who could possibly have done the best investigation based on the suspicions and information he had, who did no tests, unless he has got more information to release to the contrary, until three months later and who says the tests are inconclusive.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Philip: The minister is irresponsible and should resign. He has not done his job.

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am delighted to have a few moments to rise in this debate in order to express my views and my confidence about my colleague the Minister of the Environment. Not only is he

totally competent and trustworthy, but he happens to be the best Minister of the Environment we have had since the office was inaugurated. I can tell members that I feel a bit sensitive that so many of my colleagues in the Liberal caucus were anxious to speak and that I am particularly grateful the House leader has asked me to participate, although as I rose he said, "Try to keep it to seven minutes."

In this connection, in this sense, having asserted my confidence in the minister—I know the arguments that have completely devastated any sort of comments from the opposition have already been put—I am glad to follow the honourable member for Etobicoke-Rexdale (Mr Philip) who was quoting a letter that has been distributed in the press gallery. Addressed to the Premier, it has been circulated by the Leader of the Opposition. It is signed by Jim Conrad, a person I know personally and have known for years.

1730

As a matter of fact, since the letter has been widely quoted, there are just a few selections I think might be appropriate for the edification of the members. The letter is dated 11 May and says:

"Dear David:

"Re: Royal commission on illegal activities in the environment"—that is a good idea for tomorrow, guys, if they have not thought of it.

It begins: "You know my strong support for you and the Liberal government. The time has come to set up a royal commission on illegal activities in the environment. The suggested terms of reference are attached."

"I can play a key role." I just put that forward, because I am going to read another letter from Jim in a similar connection, because the letter which has already been quoted a few times said, "Bob Nixon, of whom we have the greatest respect," and I appreciate that. Yes, I say that, because there is a small footnote to history that the honourable members might be interested in.

During my nine years of leadership, there was always sort of a revolving cabal called the Impeach Bob Nixon Committee. I mention that in connection with Jim Conrad only as an irrelevancy, but he said, "of whom we have the greatest respect, was told of these problems on several occasions. Last November, I wrote Mr Nixon. I know he read my letter, or so his political staff said."

Okay, I have the letter here. The date of the letter is 1 December.

"Dear Bob:

Re: Solution to tax evasion, gasoline and diesel:

"The auditor's report and the media have made this matter an important priority. I would suggest it is urgent for the government of Ontario to get this matter under control. I would like to suggest that my experience and knowledge is exactly what you need in order to resolve this problem and to meet the many conflicting objectives of public policy.

"This could be by appointing me to: (a) head a public inquiry; (b) lead a senior-level task force; or (c) serve as an expert adviser to the minister."

He goes on to talk about his credentials, which are very impressive indeed. As a matter of fact, he uses that very adjective, "impressive" knowledge of the petroleum industry.

Nowhere in this letter is the possibility of the illegal disposition of PCBs or any other solvents even referred to. The whole matter has to do with tax evasion, which was brought to public attention, as far as I know, not by any newspaper reporters or any individuals, Liberals or otherwise, but by the Provincial Auditor and the Minister of Revenue. My good friend of course had the responsibility to deal with that loss of revenue, and having questioned the honourable minister and he having made a number of statements to the House, the honourable members would know that the government is proceeding in the matter in an effective and appropriate way.

This gets to the point that the Minister of the Environment has made repeatedly, that the government of course understands the rule of law. They understand our mutual and collective responsibility to the public. We know that until evidence is available of wrongdoing that no charges can be laid, and not even the friends of the NDP, those people who are so keen about the alphabet, the FBI, have done any of that. The fact that information came to the Minister of the Environment would mean that our research would be focused in such a way, but you certainly cannot arrest somebody because you get a telex from the FBI or some kind of a garbled letter from Jim Conrad, no matter how effective he might be.

I would say that really, the results of this debate are essentially a waste of time—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Hon R. F. Nixon:—other than that there is a certain degree of enjoyment exchanging views with the honourable members of the opposition as they troll back and forth in the clear lake of

government operations hoping to catch some sort of a rubber boot.

But, once again, they have failed entirely. Once again, the confidence of the people of the province remains unimpaired in our minister and our policies having to do with the environment, and in this connection, I just reiterate the view that has been expressed by all thinking members of the House, and that is that this resolution is totally inappropriate and unsubstantiated and the sooner we get rid of it, the sooner the embarrassment of the opposition party will come to an end.

Mr Cureatz: Well, nothing gives me greater pleasure than to follow the diatribe of the Treasurer—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Cureatz:—one of the Four Horsemen of this government, after years of my having the privilege of sitting in that chair listening to him, of all people, condemn that great and wonderful Conservative government of years gone by and criticize ad nauseam all of those ministers when I was a backbencher way back in the fourth or fifth row. I listened to him carry on admonishing us about parliamentary procedure. I can remember on some specific occasions outside of these chambers his expression of exasperation. Now he is coming in here and telling us.

I can only refresh the Treasurer's memory. Back in about 1985 when that esteemed Minister of the Environment, the Honourable Morley Kells—

Mr J. B. Nixon: He thought PCBs were good for you.

Mr Cureatz: That is right. It just so happened at a particular election when a truck was travelling from Quebec to the western provinces, there was a spill in northern Ontario. Here I was, knocking on doors in my riding trying to defend Catholic funding. Lo and behold, Morley comes out and says, "The only thing that is going to be affected are the rats coming out of the bushes." I tell the members I fell flat on my face on the sidewalk on a downtown street of Oshawa. Then that was not the end of it.

We heard from the leader of the official opposition, the member for London Centre (Mr Peterson), and how he condemned that nasty government under Frank Miller, and more so the then-Minister of the Environment. I have to admit, if I had been the Minister of the Environment—Frank Miller did not put me in cabinet when he first became Premier—I would have jumped in a helicopter on the expense—

Mr J. B. Nixon: He was not even going to make you a sheriff.

Mr Cureatz: Well, the only reason he made me a minister was that I happened to keep winning my riding. The fine people of Durham East understand good representation. I have my doubts about the people in Brant-Haldimand, but that is a speech for another day.

I would have gone flying up to northern Ontario and I would have condemned that trucking company and I would have put the brakes on what was taking place—

Mr J. B. Nixon: Sam for leader.

Mr Cureatz: I know; the Liberal rump has often volunteered to support me for the leadership of the Conservative Party of Ontario. As soon as I get a monetary commitment from them, I am going to take it under serious advisement.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Cureatz: Does this strike of a similar situation? We have our Minister of the Environment, to whom, on a personal basis, I have had the occasion to listen at great length. I should remind people about how he went on about the jet in these chambers, but I will save that speech for another time.

Here he is, for whom I have nothing but the utmost respect personally; he has been the shining light since that minority government was formed. I like to remind the official opposition, now that we are the third party, how they made them that government over there, and the Minister of the Environment was the new shining light of the environment.

Indeed, I will say that he has over the past four years talked a pretty good line, and he prides himself on it, similar to the way Jimmy Auld did. The Treasurer used to refer to Jimmy Auld as “nailing jelly to the wall”—he used that phrase quite often. It is the same kind of situation with the Minister of the Environment. When the official opposition critic and our critic of Environment ask any kind of question, we get a long, boring, delaying, stall-tactic, repetitious, time-consuming answer and the Speaker has to finally get up in his place and ask him to sit down.

It has finally happened. It has been building to a great crescendo. First it was landfill sites in the Golden Horseshoe of Ontario. I can remember bringing in a garbage bag into these chambers. I can remember bringing a seagull into the chambers to bring to the attention of the Minister of the Environment that he was taking no leadership in regard to landfill sites in southern

Ontario. Why do members not ask the honourable member for Durham West (Mrs Stoner) about what is taking place over landfill sites? We have not heard the end of that discussion. What do we get in addition to that? A new municipal authority, GTA, the greater Toronto area authority, made up of regional chairmen surrounding Metropolitan Toronto. These people have not been elected at large; it is another tier of government and they are coming forward to impose a solution to landfill sites.

1740

I have told the minister before that he should have taken some initiative on his own to try to get the issue resolved, and it has not been resolved yet.

I will tell members, we met with the Pickering-Ajax Citizens Together organization from the Durham region and it is darned upset. I will say to the member for Durham West that it is a heck of a lot better organized than my group was out in Durham East, and she and her government are in for some stormy times.

What has taken place now is that the issue has come forward through the investigation of a newspaper. I can remember when I was Deputy Speaker that the Treasurer—the then front-bencher of the opposition—would casually lean over to me just before question period, hold up the front page of one of the Toronto papers and say, “Here are the questions for today.” Well, history repeats itself and we are doing it now. It takes one of the greater Toronto newspapers to put its staff on a story and reveal to the province of Ontario a very important issue that I think the Minister of the Environment, whom I respect a great deal, has failed miserably on.

Now listen: do members think he is going to resign? I doubt it. Do members know why? The minister has been with Dave for a long time. He has weathered the storm. He has finally made it in the government and he is not going to be dumped from cabinet. Do not worry, he will still have the limousine driving him to St Catharines, I am sure. Two years is a long way until the next election. But right here, right now, he is in trouble.

I will say to all these backbenchers who got a little nasty over some of the discussion, trying to defend their minister, that I advise them just to quietly sit back and observe how this is unfolding. Do they know why? This was not a policy decision. This was not Sunday shopping where they could discuss the direction in which they should be going in caucus, in the Legislature and in committee work. This is not Bill 162 and

another policy decision, this is a judgement call. The minister has made a bad judgement call. He should have come forward when he found out about the particular problem that was facing all of us in Ontario. I know it is very difficult. I mean, he cannot run around and monitor each truck that is driving up and down the highway.

Mr Fleet: He is investigating.

Mr Cureatz: He is investigating. But I think it would have been important to announce to the people of Ontario: "Look, we do have a serious problem. We're trying our best to get a grasp on it. We're working with other law enforcement agencies and we will assure you that when we do have the information, we then will continue with the necessary charges." But did he do that? No. He made the judgement call to put the lid on it.

The other possibility was that he did not know anything at all about it and he is embarrassed to beat 60. I guess I could almost forgive him for that. He is busy tearing around, trying to look after his riding and after the ministry, giving speeches and trying to support the government, which is a tough job to do, I must admit. I could forgive him for that. But the judgement call was made and in my humble, quiet estimation, it was a bad judgement call. He should have come forward with the information as soon as possible so we could work along, in the capacity we always have in opposition, copacetically and agreeably, to try and help him resolve a very big issue that covers a kaleidoscope of problems, as the opposition members and we ourselves have brought forward—

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Cureatz: —be it gasoline, fuel or industry.

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time is up.

Mr Cureatz: It was an extremely—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member's time is up. I have been told there has been an agreement to revert back to the traditional rotation and proceed immediately with the government House leader.

Hon Mr Conway: It was almost three hours ago that I stood in my place and invited this debate to begin. I am delighted now at a quarter of six to participate in the concluding of this debate, the vast majority of which I have listened to.

I want to direct my remarks very specifically to the motion standing in the name of the honourable member for Sarnia, who I want to say—good fellow that he is—has not been in this chamber at

any point during the course of this two-hour-and-forty-minute debate.

I very much appreciate all the observations that have been offered. But I just want to say to my friends in the chamber, because I take this matter very seriously, I look at this resolution that the honourable leader of the third party has put before this chamber and think it says a lot that the leader of the third party, a former Minister of the Environment, did not think it important enough to grace this chamber this afternoon to either participate in this debate or to listen to any part of it. I might say, moreover, that at no time in the afternoon has there been any more than about four Tories in this chamber.

I just want to say that I reject the resolution as it stands, and put by the absent member for Sarnia. The crisis, if any exists, exists clearly in the third party.

The member for Mississauga South was in this afternoon asking me in her wonderfully delicious and rhetorical way if I was satisfied. I want to say to her in her absence: you bet I am satisfied with the stewardship of my colleague, the member for St Catharines, the Minister of the Environment.

I want to talk a little bit about that, because that is the issue—the record of this government and the outstanding leadership of the minister.

I say to the absent member for Sarnia: let's look at this record as compared to that record over the years when they had the responsibility of stewardship in the environment and elsewhere. What has this minister done in the four years that he has been responsible for the Ministry of the Environment in this connection?

I want to say to the member for Durham East (Mr Cureatz): unlike the Tories, the Minister of Environment had the guts to move on the spills bill. Do you remember that? While the Tories were out there, while the member for Sarnia was out there encouraging industry and others that this was a terrible matter that ought not to be proceeded with, the minister stood in his place and showed the guts and the leadership in a way the Tories never did.

I well remember a few years ago when the Tories, under the leadership, I believe, of the member for Sarnia, wondered about recycling. Did they have the guts to do anything about the pop bottles?

Some hon members: No.

Hon Mr Conway: This minister and this government did, and that is what we are here to talk about today.

The municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program, which this minister has brought to

this province, is an outstanding example of the kind of leadership that he has shown.

It is just a few months ago that some of the most significant private sector people in this province admitted that the tough Countdown Acid Rain initiatives that the minister introduced here a few years ago were the right direction and would be complied with.

I say to my friends here this afternoon: we do not claim perfection, unlike the official opposition, the NDP—newly divined perfection. We, on this side, do not claim perfection. I think, though, it is really paradoxical, is it not, that the leader of the official opposition would last week absolve Michael Wilson from any obligation to resign for what is clearly his responsibility as Minister of Finance, and now come into this chamber puffing away, saying that the Minister of the Environment for Ontario should resign for behaving in so responsible a fashion as he has done.

1750

I just want to say to my friend the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore (Mrs Grier) that I am glad she is back to participate in this debate. Let us look at what we are faced with at the present moment. I thought the member for Essex-Kent said it so very well. Can members imagine the New Democrats if any minister of the government had gone out without the kind of hard evidence we require to make a charge stick? Can members imagine, as the member for Essex-Kent said so eloquently here this afternoon, the outrage from the official opposition?

If there is anything of the spirit of Jim Renwick left over there, I hope it would be visited upon those members of the official opposition who understand that you cannot go forward and make a charge unless you have the evidence. That is what this debate has been all about.

Responsible ministers of the crown, unlike members of the opposition, who have their own imperatives, must show leadership, must act responsibly. The Minister of the Environment has made plain what his course of action has been. I find absolutely no inconsistency between what he has done and what reasonable people in this province would expect a minister of the crown to do.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Conway: Again, I just listen. I am sorry the member for Sarnia is not here, because the Tories have to be judged not by the outrageous language of this resolution but really by what they did when they had the chance. I have been here for 14 years. Ten of those years

were when I was in opposition watching the Tories in office. I think it is fair to say that in the 10 years between 1975 and 1985, there were nine different Tory ministers of the environment; one a year. They had people such as the former member for Humber, the great Minister of the Environment Morley Kells. When asked, and I am quoting now from a newspaper article in 1985, "Are you an environmentalist, Morley?" "Not really; I am a politician."

Well, that is about where the Tories stand. They were merely politicians when they were charged with the responsibility. And I will tell members the real environmentalists are not in the third party. When they had the opportunity, what did we see? We saw the member for Sarnia quoted in the London Free Press in November 1985, and I quote the headline, "Be Fair to Corporations, Media Urged: Andy Brandt." That is what the member for Sarnia was saying. "Go lightly on the polluters. Be fair to corporations." That was the position of the third party in 1985.

I said earlier what their view was in respect of the spills bill. We saw what they could not do or would not do when it came to recycling. And they have the breathtaking effrontery to put a resolution of this kind in this chamber at this time and ask us to compare this government's record with that performance. I must say I cannot imagine an easier task.

I might answer my earlier question: Where have all the Tories gone today? Perhaps the answer is that shame has driven the member for Sarnia and the vast majority of his colleagues out of this chamber.

I want to say to the three Tories left in this chamber that we are quite prepared to follow the Minister of the Environment as he goes forward in a serious and responsible fashion to get to the bottom of this. I do not expect some of my friends in the official opposition to understand some of the complexities and responsibilities of office. As Stephen Lewis has observed recently, that is not their responsibility in the overall scheme of things in our political culture.

But I expect more from the Tories because they know something about the responsibilities of office. The distinguished Leader of the Opposition has come in here today and he has made a great noise about what the Minister of the Environment ought to have done.

I repeat, the Minister of the Environment has made plain what he has done and what he needs to do to move forward to ensure that this matter is brought to a successful conclusion. I cannot imagine that any party politician would want that

prejudiced for whatever imperative one might imagine.

[Applause]

Ms Bryden: I would like to thank the members opposite for the applause which broke out as soon as I stood up.

I must say that I have never heard such an irrelevant speech as that given by the government House leader on this very important issue. Everything that the government House leader said the Minister of the Environment had done was done under the whip of the accord written by the New Democratic Party and signed by the Premier (Mr Peterson) and the member for York South in order to bring this government to power. But what has he done on this issue? The House leader did not tell us anything about that, and that is what we are debating today.

The public is expecting some action from the Minister of the Environment. What is before us is the stewardship of the Minister of the Environment in dealing with a very serious pollution issue. For too long the public has been conned by ministers of the environment, their administrators and their bureaucracies that there is nothing to worry about when a spill occurs, when pollution occurs or when a situation such as we have just heard about in this last 10 days occurs.

They say: "We are looking after your welfare. We are looking after public health." For too long the public has been kept in the dark. They have not been told of the dangers to public health that are occurring. We all know that at one time PCBs were legal. Now we have discovered they are lethal, but we have not caught up with that yet by way of getting rid of them. They are still being stored in improper places so that they can then be mixed in with fuel in illegal operations.

We know that DDT was at one time accepted and is now rejected. We know that with all sorts of pollutants the government's levels or guidelines have been found inadequate. People no longer trust a minister who does not take them into his confidence and tell them about threats to their public health. To say that he must follow the prosecutions—it will not affect the prosecutions if he tells the public what is going on and alerts them to the dangers to their health. We must have a minister who will make his primary mandate to protect public health when a contamination threat arises from any product or activity in this

province. We do not have that. That is why we need a change of minister.

Second, we must get a minister who will have the guts to use the powers in the Environmental Protection Act which he has and which he could have used in the last two or three months or more when he knew about this scam that was going on. He could have used a stop order to prevent the sales of any fuel shipment from companies undergoing investigation by the ministry or by US authorities. He could have run tests on the fuels at the point of sale. He could have used the search and seizure provisions of the Environmental Protection Act to trace the sale of possibly contaminated fuels from the companies under investigation in the last several months or years.

He could have informed the public about what to watch for when buying and using heating oil, diesel fuel and gasoline and set up a system for the public to report incidences. He could have ensured that no possibly contaminated fuel is sold in institutions run by the government, particularly where there is health care, education and child care.

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time is up.

Ms Bryden: He could have used these, but he did not. That is why we need—

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. This concludes the debate on this matter. The government House leader has some announcements, I presume.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Mr Conway: Pursuant to standing order 13, I would like to indicate the business of the House for the coming week.

On Monday, 15 May, we will continue with the reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor and the vote on the throne speech will be taken at 5:45 pm on Monday.

On Tuesday, 16 May, we will deal with bills 205, 206, 207 and 218. Time permitting, we will deal with Bill 194 in committee of the whole House.

On Wednesday, 17 May, after question period, the House will adjourn for a short while and resume at 4 pm as the Treasurer (Mr R. F. Nixon) reads his budget speech.

On Thursday, 18 May, in the morning, we will deal with private members' business standing in the names of Mr Villeneuve and Mr Matrundola. In the afternoon, we will be dealing with the opposition budget responses.

The House adjourned at 1802.

ERRATA

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
9	368	2	39	As former editor Leila Hvidsten wrote in an

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

- Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)
 Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)
 Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)
 Beer, Charles (York North L)
 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)
 Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)
Bradley, Hon James J., Minister of the Environment (St Catharines L)
 Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breagh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)
 Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)
 Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)
Caplan, Hon Elinor, Minister of Health (Orillia L)
 Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)
 Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
 Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)
 Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)
 Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)
Conway, Hon Sean G., Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)
 Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)
 Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)
 Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)
Curling, Hon Alvin, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)
 Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)
 Dietsch, Michael M. (St Catharines-Brock L)
Eakins, Hon John F., Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)
Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A., Speaker (Perth L)
 Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)
Elston, Hon Murray J., Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L)
 Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)
 Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)
 Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)
 Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)
 Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)
 Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)
 Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)
Fontaine, Hon René, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)
Fulton, Hon Ed, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)
Grandmaitre, Hon Bernard C., Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)
 Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)
 Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)
 Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)
 Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)
 Hart, Christine E. (York East L)
 Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)
Hošek, Hon Chaviva, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)
 Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Kanter, Ron (St Andrew-St Patrick L)
Kerrio, Hon Vincent G., Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)
 Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)
 Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)
Kwinter, Hon Monte, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L)
 Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)
 LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)
 Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)
 Lipsett, Ron (Grey L)
 Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L)
 MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L)
 Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)
 Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)
Mancini, Hon Remo, Minister without Portfolio (Essex South L)
 Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)
 Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)
 Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L)
 McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)
 McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)
 McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)
 McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)
 McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)
McLeod, Hon Lyn, Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)
 Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

- Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste Marie NDP)
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)
Nixon, Hon Robert F., Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics (Brant-Haldimand L)
Oddie Munro, Hon Lily, Minister of Culture and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)
O'Neil, Hon Hugh P., Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Quinte L)
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)
Patten, Hon Richard, Minister of Government Services (Ottawa Centre L)
 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)
Peterson, Hon David R., Premier and President of the Council and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (London Centre L)
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)
Phillips, Hon Gerry, Minister of Citizenship (Scarborough-Agincourt L)
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott and Russell L)
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)
Ramsay, Hon David, Minister of Correctional Services (Timiskaming L)
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-Walkerville L)
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)
 Reyecraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)
Riddell, Hon Jack, Minister of Agriculture and Food (Huron L)
 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)
Scott, Hon Ian G., Attorney General (St George-St David L)
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)
Smith, Hon E. Joan, Solicitor General (London South L)
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)
Sorbara, Hon Gregory S., Minister of Labour (York Centre L)
 South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)
 Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)
 Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)
Sweeney, Hon John, Minister of Community and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)
 Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)
 Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)
 Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)
Ward, Hon Christopher C., Minister of Education (Wentworth North L)
 Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)
Wilson, Hon Mavis, Minister without Portfolio (Dufferin-Peel L)
 Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)
Wong, Hon Robert C., Minister of Energy (Fort York L)
Wrye, Hon William, Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

*The alphabetical list of members appears in each issue. Lists of the members of the executive council, parliamentary assistants and members of committees, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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